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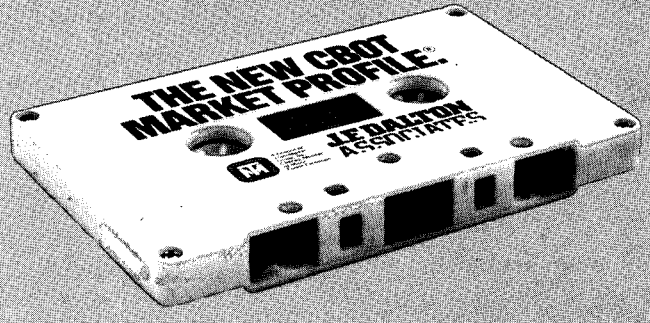

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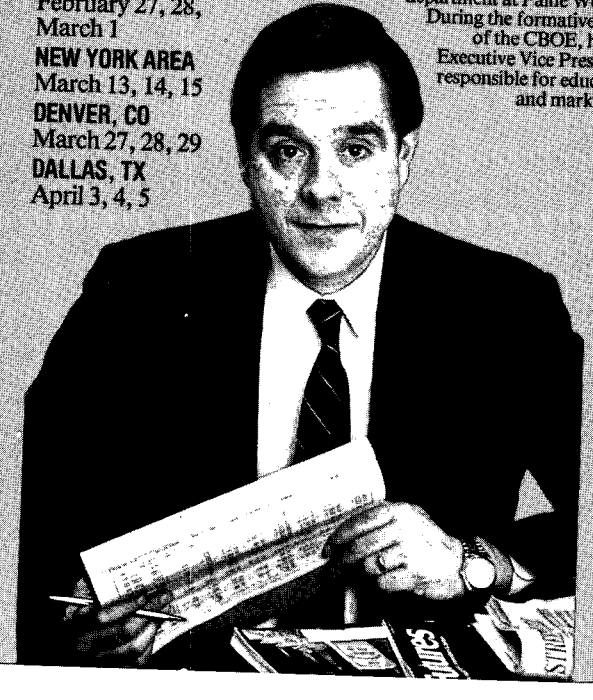

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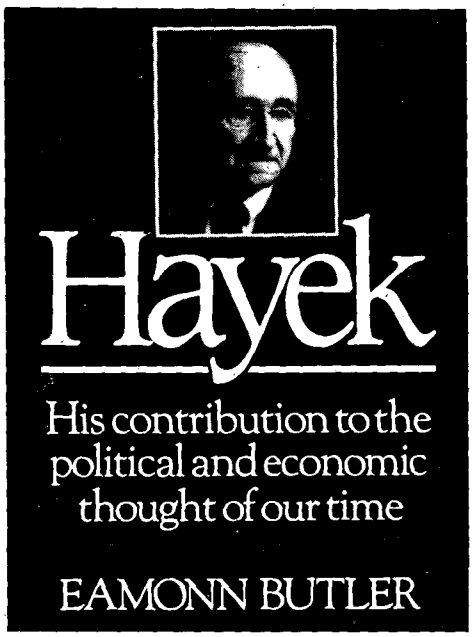

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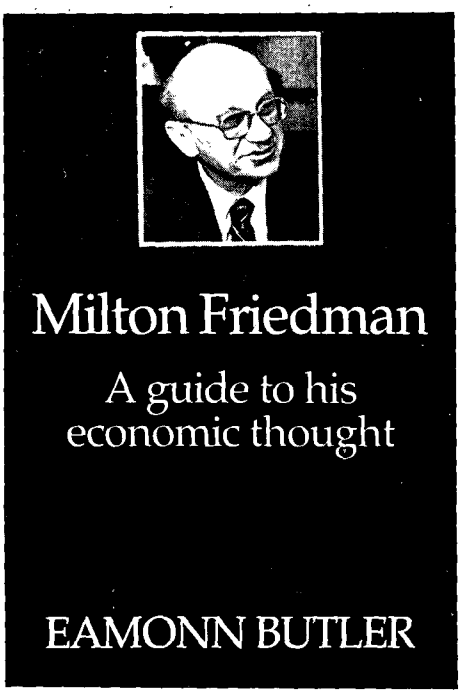

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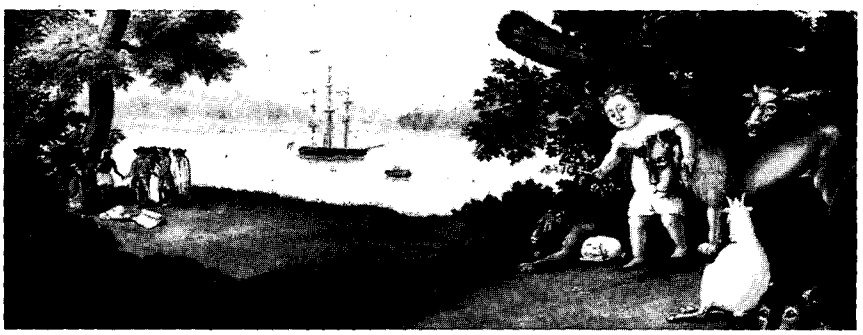

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REASON *(ISSN 0048-6906) is published monthly except combined August-September issue by the Reason Foundation, a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization, 2716 Ocean Park Blvd., Suite 1062, Santa Monica, CA 90405. Second-class postage paid at Santa Monica and additional mailing offices.* ***POSTMASTER:*** *Send address changes to REASON, Box 27977, San Diego, CA 92128.* *Copyright ©1987 by the Reason Foundation. All rights reserved. Reproduction or use, without permission, of editorial or graphic content is prohibited. REASON is a registered trademark owned by the Reason Foundation.* ***SUBSCRIPTIONS:*** *$24.00 per year. Outside U.S. add $8/year surface, $36/year airmail. Address all subscription correspondence to: REASON, Box 27977, San Diego, CA 92128; 619/485-9623 or 566-6947. For address change (allow six weeks), provide old address and new address, including zip code.* ***UNSOLICITED MANUSCRIPTS*** *will be returned only if accompanied by SASE.* ***INDEXED*** *in America: History and Life, Historical Abstracts, Political Science Abstracts, PAIS Bulletin, and Public Issues Index.*

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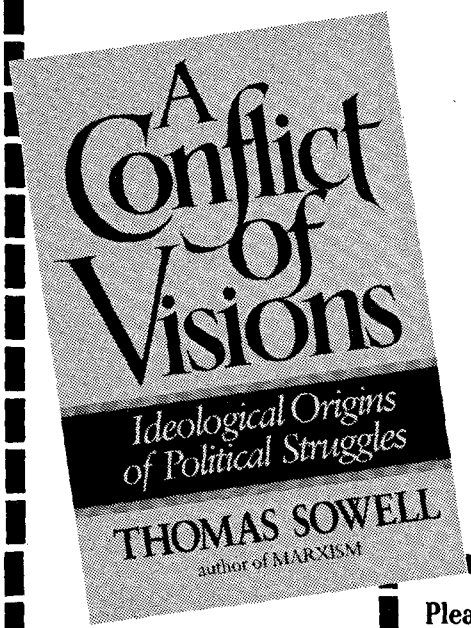

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Calling All Bureaucrats

It was, I thought, a relatively simple task: make one or two phone calls and get the answer to a yes-or-no question. I should have known better—the call was to the federal government.

It all started with a public-policy development with prime Trends potential: the Labor Department had proposed (yet again) lifting the 44-year-old federal ban on commercial garment work done at home. All I needed was to find out whether the proposal passed.

I called the office of Labor Secretary William Brock. But instead of getting an answer, I got shuffled from one bureaucrat to another. I got put on hold. I was told to call so-and-so at another number. I must have talked to at least five people before someone could help me. O.K.—except the progression of calls seemed to follow no logical pattern. Not only did people not know the answer to my question, they didn't know who *did*. They just passed me along to the next guy.

Worse, most of the people didn't even *understand* my question. (I could see that this proposal was really making waves in Washington). Maybe I should have referred to "commercial work done at home" instead of the more common "home work." Still, I didn't expect people there to ask incredulously, "Proposal to ban *homework*?" —like they thought their kids would be prohibited from studying after school (which, given the things the state regulates, is not so far-fetched).

I finally got someone who told me that the two-month public comment period for the proposal had been extended another month and a half. I'd have to call back then.

I did. But instead of calling the person who'd finally helped me last time, I conducted a little experiment. I pretended I was Joe Concerned Citizen, who wasn't used to calling the federal government. I figured the average person would start with Brock's office, so that's what I did.

Even though I was more precise this time, inquiring about the proposal to lift the ban on *industrial* home work, the response was still, *"What?"* The third person I spoke with on the first call told me to try the deputy undersecretary in the Employment Standards Office, who in turn gave me a name and number in the Wage and Hour Office. The second person there referred me to someone in something called National Employment, who passed me on to yet another person. By then I had no idea whom I was speaking to, in what department.

I had to make five phone calls and talk with eight people to get the answer to a simple question. Given how often I have to do this, I shouldn't have been surprised. But I never really stopped to think how hard it is to be a concerned citizen—hard on your patience and hard on your wallet. If I had been trying to call someone in the business world—and this does happen there, although far less frequently—I wouldn't have felt so trapped and frustrated. I would have hung up and called another company. But that's not possible with our civil servants, and they know it. They don't need to be helpful; they don't even need to be nice. You and I are paying for this service.

By the way, the Labor Department is reviewing public comments on the proposal. The person I spoke with doesn't know when the department will make its decision. I'm supposed to call back later.

On a happier note, we at REASON were proud to see Dick Rutan and Jeana Yeager make aviation history in the Voyager last December when they completed their round-the-world flight. REASON spotlighted Dick and his brother, Burt, who designed the Voyager, in April 1985. The brothers were (and remain) outspoken in their belief that government regulations stymie aeronautical progress. Now they'll be known for setting a world record without using any government money. The trio financed the venture with their own money and that of grass-roots and corporate supporters. Said Dick Rutan exultantly after landing, "We did it on our own."

—Lucy Braun

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letters

Save Stirner From the Burners

That was a curious assortment of literature selected by the contributors to your "What to Save When the Book Burners Come" (Dec.). The books selected might have been expected at a convention of librarians, but for a magazine presumably dedicated to the principles of liberty—my, oh, my!

Why no mention of the greatest of individualists, the one contemporary Karl Marx feared—Max Stirner? Some of your contributors listed works by Ayn Rand, but Stirner beat her to the arena by over a century. Most of Rand's thought derives from Stirner and Nietzsche. It's a pity that the intellectual world didn't listen to Stirner's warning, in 1844, that the Marxian program held the potential of being the most ruthless political system in history.

Stirner preached the doctrine of getting value out of oneself. This, he asserted, could be achieved only through a philosophy of complete personal liberty. The title of his famous book, *Der Einzige und Sein Eignetum*, has been translated as *The Ego and His Own*, but a more literal rendering might be "The Unique One and His Property." This embodies the concept of each individual as unique and the sole owner of his most valuable property—himself.

Surely, no single book has been more unrelentingly devoted to the exercise of reason in opposing the illusions and delusions of socialism and what we now know as the sentimental social ethic which demands the submission of the individual to the community. No book has probed more deeply into the contradictory relationship between the real and the ideal.

Albert Dahlquist
Mundelein, IL

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Ppht! Ppht!

Your respondents' lists show a few surprising omissions. What philosophical writings are as profoundly liberating and intellectually stimulating as the works of the three great Austro-Hungarian / British evolutionary epistemologists: Karl Popper, Michael Polanyi, and F. A. Hayek? In each case, it is hard to pick a single best or most representative work; but at the least, Popper's *Conjectures and Refutations*, Polanyi's *Personal Knowledge*, and Hayek's *Law, Legislation, and Liberty* would make quite a difference in an otherwise authoritarian and anti-individualistic world.

As for works of fiction, I would certainly add *The Lord of the Rings* by J. R. R. Tolkien Like Popper, Polanyi, and Hayek, Tolkien has the rare ability to inspire a deep love of liberty, of the other values it makes possible, and of the virtue of responsible personal judgment and action that is its most noble expression.

Thanks for yet another thought-provoking issue.

Phil Salin
Redwood City, CA

How the DEA Could Be Out of a Job

The December cover story ("Inside the DEA") reminded me of an essay on NPR's "All Things Considered" that I heard last summer. The essay focused on the demise of the moonshiner and his industry in the South.

The commentator made it clear not only that many had derived their livelihood from this illegal manufacture and sale but that the cat-and-mouse game with the Revenuers was a serious one, pursued with vigor by the forces of the law.

Somewhere in the middle of the segment they happened to mention that the reason for the virtual disappearance of moonshining is that there are few if any dry areas anymore, and legal liquor is available

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letters

everywhere. There was no attempt to suggest an extension of this successful method of eradication.

Avery R. Johnson
Milford, NH

There's Defensive And Then There's Defensive

I commend Mr. Poole for his generally excellent pro-SDI editorial in your January edition ("Don't Trade SDI—For Anything"). However, parts of his closing remarks make hash out of sound strategic principles. He contends that even though we must "not ignore" the nature of the Soviet Union, we must "at least try to reduce" the numbers of "terrible" nuclear weapons; and he insists that defensive systems such as SDI "cannot be a bargaining chip" and "must become our primary form of protection in a dangerous and risky world."

First, nuclear weapons are not terrible except in the context of use—any more than is a pistol; for defense and protection of liberty, *any* weapon is a wonderful invention. Second, I submit that an accurate estimate of the nature of the present Soviet government means that we most certainly must *not* try to reduce our nuclear arsenal. Third, *nothing*—including offensive systems—should be bargained to the Soviets. Fourth, wise strategy requires a flexible mix of offensive and defensive weapons. That mix can change over time, and no one can say a priori that defensive systems such as SDI must be "our primary" emphasis.

Well-intentioned people often feel this way, though, because of a common yet crucial equivocation between *technically* defensive systems and *morally* defensive systems. For a nation dedicated to protection of individual rights, any technically offensive or defensive mix is morally defensive; for an aggressor, the opposite. This is akin to it being morally defensive for a mugger's victim to use either punching or blocking, moves that in boxing are technically offensive and defensive, respectively. But since the mugger's intent is assault, his use of either punching or blocking is morally offensive and unjustified. It's devastatingly confusing to fail to distinguish between the technical and moral contexts of defense.

E. G. Ross
Eugene, OR

Vonnegut's Brains Too Large?

While "It's No Sin to Like Vonnegut" (Dec.), neither is it a virtue. Despite Jeff Riggenbach's assertions to the contrary, Vonnegut's latest novel *Galapagos* is hardly an appropriate entree on a liberty-minded bill of fare. The entire thrust of *Galapagos* is that human brains too large for their own good, fueled by capitalistic greed, cause the destruction of the human race. Vonnegut's utopia consists of a modified human race incapable of intelligent thought. (Is it conscionable that a book such as this received a favorable review in a magazine entitled REASON?!) Lest we forget, Vonnegut sums up his view of life in his novel *Sirens of Titan* through the words of Malachi Constant, "I was a victim of a series of accidents as are we all."

As an antidote to the literary ptomaine served up by Mr. Vonnegut, I direct readers to this rejoinder issued by Tom Robbins in his wickedly funny novel *Still Life With Woodpecker*: "Don't let yourself be victimized by the age you live in. It's not the times that will bring us down, any more than it's society. When you put the blame on society, then you end up turning to society for the solution. There's a tendency today to absolve individuals of moral responsibility and treat them as victims of social circumstance. You buy that, you pay with your soul. It's not men who limit women, it's not straights who limit gays, it's not whites who limit blacks. What limits people is lack of character. What limits people is that they don't have the -ucking nerve or imagination to star in their own movie, let alone direct it."

A dash of Robbins's verve will leave you in much better spirits than the most innocuous slop served up by Mr. Vonnegut.

Christopher Bedore
St. Lisle, IL

Has the Pyramid Flipped Yet?

Robert Chapman Wood's use of the word *pyramid* was apt in his article "Wipe Out!" (Dec.). Our Social Security system is a huge pyramid scheme—the present recipients are at the top of the pyramid, and those of us at the bottom may face the broken promises of a bankrupt, broken chain letter.

However, my research shows that your portrayal of the pyramid turning upside down is inaccurate. In 1960, we had 4.5 workers to support one individual on Social Security. In 1970, we had four workers for every recipient, and in 1980, we went to three workers per recipient, *not* one worker per 3.2 recipients as Wood claimed. It is estimated that by 2025, there will be only two workers per beneficiary. So, the pyramid scheme has not flipped yet. But give it a few more years. Thanks for an otherwise perspicacious article.

Mark J. Perry
Minneapolis, MN

Editor's reply: Mr. Perry is correct. The figure quoted in the article was taken from a U.S. Chamber of Commerce publication, which reversed the 1980 numbers. But, as Mr. Perry notes, the point remains the same—we're all victims of a pyramid scheme.

They Can Dish It Out, But Can They Take It?

While an excellent article, "Dishing Out Competition" (Jan. '87) leaves out some important facts. First, no cable service can ever hope to offer the variety of programs on the 140-plus channels available to dish owners (many of which will *never* scramble). Second, all satellite pictures are studio perfect—no ghosts, hum bars, bad color, etc. Third, nice systems are now available for less than $600 for those who do the nontechnical labor themselves. And fourth, black-box decoders, though quite expensive, again allow dish owners to get *all* programing for free. The only practical option HBO & Co. has to defeat these is to radically drop the price of their decoders and program packages.

Peteris Dobulis
Mesick, MI

Correction: "Inside the DEA" (Dec.) erroneously reported that Mallory Horne was convicted of money-laundering charges after he refused to take an FBI agent, who would have publicly posed as a legitimate lawyer, into his law firm. He was in fact acquitted of all charges. REASON regrets the error.

Freedom Without Borders

Virginia I. Postrel

"We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented. Sometimes we must interfere. When human lives are endangered, national borders and sensitivities become irrelevant. Wherever men or women are persecuted because of their race, religion, or political views, that place must—at that moment—become the center of the universe."

Tough talk in a world in which "interfering in the internal affairs of another nation" is a cardinal sin. But for those of us who care about human liberty, who believe individuals are more important than states, author Elie Wiesel's words on receipt of the 1986 Nobel Peace Prize constitute an important reminder. National borders are artificial constructs, products of politics and wars. We can't ignore them—but neither should we let them hide those they hold captive.

None of this is to suggest that the U.S. government should invade the Soviet Union or send in the Marines to liberate Nelson Mandela. But it does mean that human rights do not begin and end at home. If we as individuals are concerned about liberty in our own country, it follows naturally that we will care about the freedom of those who don't inhabit the same corner of the globe. And we will not only care, we will act.

For starters, we will complain—loud and long—about attacks on individual liberty. This outcry may focus on specific people; given short attention spans, especially in the media, this is often an effective tactic. When the Soviet Union released its most famous dissidents last year—Natan (Anatoly) Shcharansky to Israel, and Andrei Sakharov and Yelena Bonner to Moscow from internal exile in Gorky—it did so because international opprobrium had made the cost of holding them prisoner greater than the benefit of letting them go.

Focusing on individuals personalizes oppression, makes for good symbolism, and may lead to freedom for those individuals. But emphasizing celebrities presents dangers of its own.

First of all, it may delude us into thinking that the release of a few visible individuals signifies great changes. As Shcharansky noted in a *Wall Street Journal* article, "If an observer in New York or Washington may be deceived by the modern sophistication of the current dictator, those of us who suffered or continue to suffer in the Soviet Union cannot be misled....At the very time I was being released, such a [Hebrew] teacher, Alexey Magarik, was arrested on trumped-up charges of drug possession. Another Hebrew teacher, Yuli Edelstein, became an invalid in the camp and is doomed to remain so for the rest of his life." The celebrities may be released, but the conditions that made them prisoners persist.

(This is why famous prisoners of conscience tend to annoint their successors. Sakharov, for example, has emphasized the plight of Serafim Yevsyukov and his son Serafim, Jr. The father was first sent to a Moscow mental institution for requesting an exit visa; he is now imprisoned in a clinic where doctors try to change his views by injecting him with drugs. The son has been sent to a labor camp north of the Arctic Circle for refusing to serve in the army.)

By focusing on celebrities, we also run the risk of ignoring oppression that takes no prisoners. The more general state terror found in Ethiopia or Guatemala doesn't fit neatly into a schema of police versus prisoners. Nor does outright genocide of the Nazi or Khmer Rouge variety. Whose release do you ask for when everyone is dead? Yet state terror hurts individuals, anonymous though they may be.

All of this brings us to perhaps the most fundamental freedom, and one of the most often denied—the right to vote with your feet, to pick up and get the hell out. The passport and visa, rare until a century ago, have become terrible instruments of state power. The best known example is, of course, the Soviet Union's refusal to grant exit visas to people like Serafim Yevsyukov who have become disenchanted with the socialist paradise.

The right to emigrate is, however, the flip side of the right to immigrate—and that one the U.S. government is only too eager to deny. Even as we cheered the Statue of Liberty last year, Congress slapped more locks on the golden door.

Contrary to fashionable opinion, the government doesn't simply discriminate against people fleeing right-wing regimes. It takes a more general closed-door stance. The freedom-loving folks at the Immigration and Naturalization Service granted asylum to only seven of the 216 Guatemalans who asked for it last year. But they also denied almost *3,000* Nicaraguans the same status, accepting fewer than 1,300 as refugees. Even people from Afghanistan find themselves behind bars in America. Our borders, too, have become prison walls for the oppressed.

If he were making a movie about the Jewish immigrant experience in the United States, cartoonist Art Spiegelman says he'd show the mice drowning off the coast of Cuba while U.S. officials refuse to let them in—not cheerfully singing à la Steven Spielberg's *An American Tail*. Our immigration policy has changed little since the government turned away thousands of Jews in the '30s and '40s, sending them to their deaths in Europe. The names have been changed, but mice are still drowning. The struggle for human rights does begin at home, after all. ◻

How Executives Overcome The #1 Fear: Public Speaking

You probably aspire to a higher position in your organization, as do most executives.

But, as you've undoubtedly discovered, the more you climb that career ladder or build your own company, the more you are expected to have public speaking ability. And if you own the company, it's crucial.

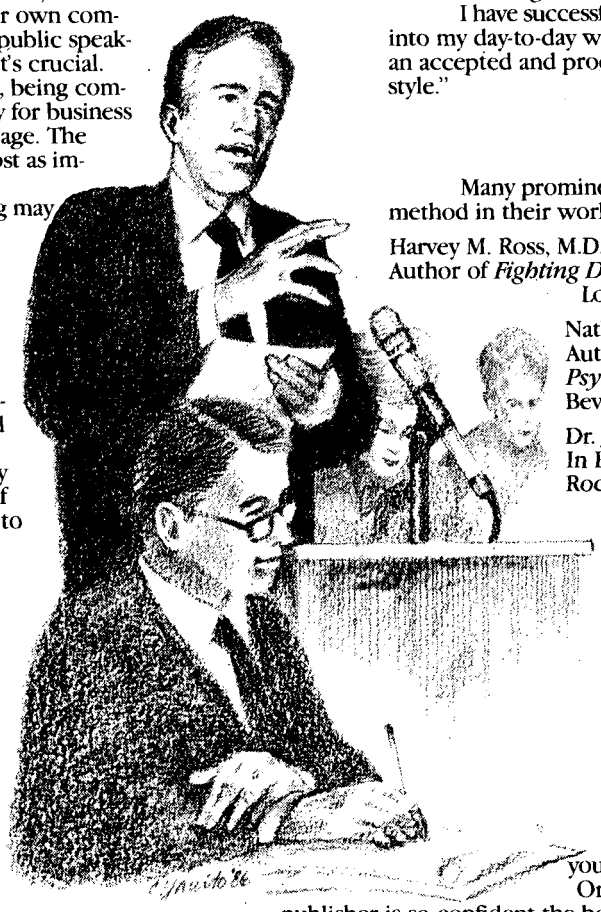
In fact, according to many experts, being competent in oral communication is necessary for business survival in this revolutionary information age. The way you present an idea has become almost as important as the idea itself.

But, the thought of public speaking may make you very anxious. If you dread the thought of public speaking you are not alone. It may surprise you but, the most common fear that many business people and executives share is speaking before a group.

For help, you may have already turned to organizations such as Toastmasters and Dale Carnegie. These groups and others like them can be helpful to polish skills and developing techniques, but they are obviously not helpful if the thought of speaking is so paralyzing it's not possible to even start.

Any fear which is intense enough to control behavior to any degree is considered a phobia by all the professional experts. Up until recently, phobia treatments were painful, time consuming, and expensive. But no longer.

Fortunately there is an answer to this problem that is helping more business people each day. A remarkable new book by Roger J. Callahan, Ph.D., *How Executives Overcome Public Speaking and Other Phobias* can have you comfortable before a group in a very short time – sometimes in just a few minutes.



Dr. Callahan is a prominent West Coast psychologist. He's had a life-long interest in phobias. Even his doctoral dissertation was on the subject. His professional experience and frustration with conventional phobia treatment led him to his breakthrough discoveries.

With his new technique, his pioneering work on phobias has been 95% successful with the fear of public speaking. Particularly with executives. He has also had outstanding results with the fear of flying, open places and other phobias as well.

Here are the actual words of one reader:

"Before your five minute treatment, I was terrified at the prospect of speaking before the most prominent executives at the company where I was employed. After the treatment, I was able to address thirty of our senior management executives without experiencing any fear or feeling of anxiety. As a result, I was able to think and speak with usual clarity.

I was so impressed with the results of the treatment, I decided to use it on my own employees with tremendous results. Some of the problems I have successfully treated include fear of talking on the telephone, fear of conflict in dealing with difficult co-workers, fear of inadequacy, on-the-job emotional outbursts, and even a traumatic childhood fear of dogs.

I have successfully incorporated your treatment into my day-to-day work activities and consider it an accepted and productive part of my management style."

Vaughn E. Kraft
Anaheim, CA

Many prominent Doctors use the Dr. Callahan method in their work including:

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Author of *Fighting Depression and Hypoglycemia*
Los Angeles, CA

Nathanial Branden, Ph. D.
Author of *The Disowned Self and Psychology of Romantic Love*
Beverly Hills, CA

Dr. James Hogg
In Private Practice
Rock Island, IL

Luanne Ruona, M.D.
Author of *Total Glow*
Washington, D.C.

The book will show you how to step by step overcome the fear of public speaking. It is a natural treatment. You can do it for yourself or for someone else. There is no need for drugs of any kind. Once the speaking fear is eliminated you'll then be able to develop and polish your skills to whatever level you wish.

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brickbats

Help embattled citizens and make a buck out of statism: a Texas entrepreneur is selling drug-free urine for $49.95 a bag. Byrd Laboratories' advertisement says the urine is "for experimental purposes only," but the company guarantees "100 percent pure urine...suitable for unanticipated urine demand." The business touts itself as "Your Urine Specialists." Lab owner Jeffrey Nightbyrd "speculates" that the most common use of his product will be to beat on-the-job urine tests for drug use. "The government says they have a right to take bodily fluids. I just decided I'd make some money off that because people are going to resist," he says. And there are no state laws prohibiting urine sales. Nightbyrd gets his product through a Bible study group.

Wish we'd thought of it first. *The New Republic* magazine recently sponsored a contest to find a catchword for the Iran-to-Nicaragua connection. The winner: Iranamok. Honorable Mention went to Contramania, Saudi Night Fever, Teflondome, and Gipperloo.

A quadriplegic woman who reportedly earns up to $140,000 a year on the Atlantic City Boardwalk playing an electronic keyboard with her tongue has won the right to continue to do so. Celestine Tate—who 10 years ago gained custody of her infant daughter by demonstrating to a judge that she could change diapers with her teeth—had accumulated more than 50 summonses over the years. Thanks to her challenge to the city's antibegging ordinance, she'll now be granted a special permit.

It isn't Springsteen tickets all those Russians are waiting hours in line for. It's liquor. Stringent measures to cut alcohol consumption are becoming as outdated as a sloe gin fizz. Communist Party chief Mikhail Gorbachev wanted his comrades to drink less. But it seems his antialcohol laws just created longer lines. The lines had formed daily across the country well before the 2:00 P.M. opening and remained until the 8:00 P.M. closing. Widespread public discontent over the antibooze laws was so strong that one brave comrade in Vladivostok publicly griped to Gorbachev when the party chief stopped to chat. The state-owned liquor stores have now extended their hours.

"NOT ONLY THAT, ALL THE TEFLON SEEMS TO HAVE WASHED OFF...."

"I'll trade you one American hostage for your new sandals, Khalid." This may soon become normal conversation in Libya, the land of the fanatically wacky. The people's republic plans to abolish money and replace it with a barter system. Col. Moammar Gadhafi looks on in approval. Now, if he could only exchange his Line of Death for some friends.

Looking for a pair of illegal crocodile boots? Try the feet of Customs Service agents working the Mexican border. They confiscate boots made from endangered species, then wear them undercover—supposedly to blend into the crowd. But some inspectors think internal affairs "headhunters" shouldn't get free boots. An unsigned memo distributed to members of the National Treasury Employees Union in El Paso sums it up well: "By wearing seized crocodile and sea turtle boots, the headhunters have sunk to a new low. This management practice is as ridiculous as it would be for inspectors to smoke the pot and snort the coke we seize!"

Who says crime doesn't pay? An estimated $1.16 million in Social Security benefits may be going to jailed felons each year, despite a federal law prohibiting such payments. Richard P. Kusserow, inspector general of the Health and Human Services Department, said in an audit that checks totaling $261,000 a year may be mailed to felons in county jails. An unpublished audit estimates that $900,000 in payments are sent to felons in state and federal prisons.

An offer the police can't refuse? Justin Dintino, chief of the organized crime and intelligence division of the New Jersey State Commission of Investigation, says, "We've learned that if you don't have a Mafia problem, you don't get any federal money. So you manufacture it." Dintino says his experience on the President's Commission on Organized Crime made it clear that "the poor law enforcement people down South, for example, didn't have any Italians. So they didn't get any money."

—Mark Edward Crane

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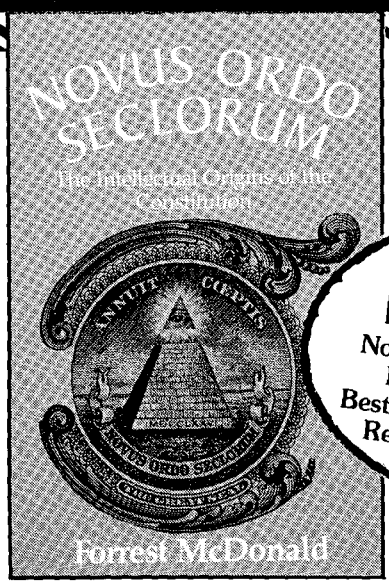

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Professor Forrest McDonald of the University of Alabama is conservatism's foremost Constitutional authority, and perhaps America's. The Pulitzer Prize committee generally sticks to safe, respectable liberal authors. But they couldn't ignore this major book. The praise is pouring in from conservative heavyweights — and also from historians with imposing credentials:

RUSSELL KIRK, *Reflections:* "Vigorously and wittily written, and it makes the framing of the Constitution interesting all over again, even for people who have read much on the subject over the years. Its portraits of the individual Framers are careful and candid, and healthily iconoclastic when there is need for correction of pious errors."

STANLEY N. KATZ, Princeton: "This is McDonald's best book and, indeed, the best single volume on the origins of the U.S. Constitution and the accomplishment of the Constitutional Convention of 1787....Most of *Novus Ordo Seclorum* is devoted to a rigorous analysis of 18th-century thought (political theory, political economy, and law). It is solidly grounded in the most recent scholarship and based upon a very original reading of the primary sources. McDonald writes with uncommon grace; the book is a pleasure to read, but it is nevertheless densely and vigorously argued....no reader will regret the hours devoted to this work."

M. E. BRADFORD, *National Review:* "The stature of Forrest McDonald as an interpreter of the confluence of language, thought, and action that issued in the United States Constitution was extraordinary even before the publication of his most recent consideration of that subject. Now ... his authority is unequaled — magisterial ....of inestimable value ... McDonald's masterpiece is the reconstruction of an intellectual milieu....Conservatives in particular should therefore salute his achievement as not merely an intellectual feat but an unparallelled act of service to the Republic..."

LANCE BANNING, author of *The Jeffersonian Persuasion:* "More enjoyable and more provocative than anything I've seen on the Constitutional Convention for a very long time....finely crafted, humorous, and learned."

CHARLES R. KESLER, *American Spectator:* "Like all of his works, this one displays at once an encyclopedic learning and a biographer's sense of character that make his retelling of a familiar story always new, vital, and unexpected. Somehow he finds angles to work that no one else has seen or seen so well."

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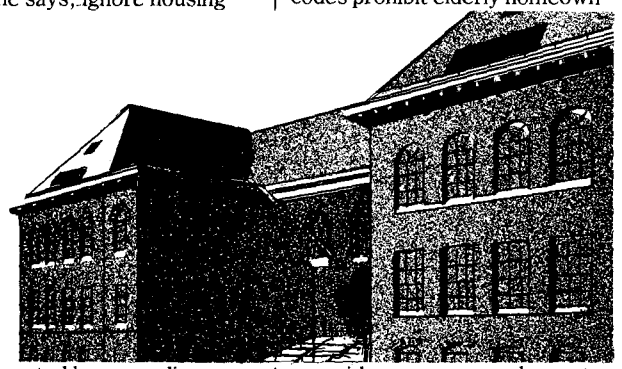
trends

House Hunting? Look in the Shadows

"The Shadow Market for Housing: It consists of the processes that provide housing by means other than new construction. If state and local laws gave this activity more scope, many affordable dwelling units would be available."

Just when you thought it was safe to cancel your *Scientific American* subscription, the venerable journal discovers the free market. In a recent article, author William C. Baer argues that one of the most important sources of low-cost housing in America has been not only ignored by planners but also discouraged by government regulations. Housing statistics generated by counting building permits and other signs of red tape, he says, ignore housing



units created by expanding or subdividing existing dwellings or by converting nonresidential buildings. This "shadow market" includes partitioned houses and apartments, but also former school buildings, industrial lofts, and churches now transformed into apartments or condos.

The shadow market, the article reports, accounted for 21 percent of the housing units added between 1973 and 1980, compared to about 10 percent in the 1950s and '60s. More importantly, argues Baer, it encompassed half of new low-cost rental units and a third of low-cost units occupied by owners—all without subsidies and often without government approval.

Instead of calling for more federal subsidies to deal with the perceived shortage of affordable housing, Baer says local governments should loosen supposed land-use regulations, which actually dramatically influence the supply of housing. "All too often the local regulations thwart or impede [shadow market] modifications. In so doing they unnecessarily bar a fraction of the population from a ready-made source of low-cost housing."

He particularly criticizes zoning codes that haven't kept up with demographic changes and try to force people into single-family homes. For example, such codes prohibit elderly homeowners with extra room and no extra money from converting their single-family homes to two-family houses or from simply renting out part of the house. Fewer regulations, says Baer, "could also encourage the use of older and currently vacant or underutilized commercial and industrial space."

Now if they'd just go after rent control...

Come on Baby, Fight My Fire

"The people have spoken," political prankster Dick Tuck once observed after a campaign of his went down to defeat. "The bastards!" Those who pump for the privatization of local-government functions are more sanguine about the vox populi these days, thanks to a victory for privatization at the polls in Fort Walton Beach, Florida.

The referendum was placed on last November's ballot by the town's firefighters, who became worried when city officials visited the Scottsdale, Arizona, headquarters of the maverick private fire-fighting company, Rural/Metro. The subject of a May 1976 REASON feature and later a CBS "60 Minutes" segment, the company currently provides fire-fighting services equivalent to "about 25 fire departments," primarily in the Golden Agers State, according to Rural/Metro spokesman John Turner.

The Fort Walton Beach referendum, in the form of an amendment to the city charter, required that police and fire departments be "manned by city employees," thus precluding privatization. A heated, often rancorous campaign was carried on through most of 1986. Rural/Metro, which hopes to bid on a Fort Walton Beach contract, turned to radio, TV, and newspaper advertising, as well as interviews and speaking appearances, "to raise public awareness of the differences between public and private fire departments." Pointing out the private sector's cost effectiveness and higher productivity, the company claimed it could provide service comparable to the

city firefighters' for $300,000 less per year. Opponents of private-enterprise service issued ominous warnings of corruption and unaccountability should blaze busters no longer be government workers.

When the votes were counted, the wise and good citizens of Fort Walton Beach affirmed the city's right to privatize by defeating the referendum, 3,634 to 2,537. "To our knowledge," says Rural/Metro's Turner, this popular vote on privatization "is the first ever."

City officials have not yet announced if and when they'll privatize. If experience is any indicator, they'll be in for another fight from the firefighters' union if they move in that direction (see "Blazing Battles," REASON, Nov. 1983). But the voice of the people has at least cleared the way.

Deregulation? You Can Bank On More

The naysayers are saying nay and even invoking the ever-so-irrelevant name of Ivan Boesky. But the Reagan administration still says it plans to take on the biggest remaining restriction on banks' economic freedom—the depression-era Glass-Steagall Act, which prohibits banks from

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engaging in commerce.

Glass-Steagall means that U.S. commercial banks, whose federal charters allow them to take deposits and make commercial loans, can't diversify into such financial services as insurance and underwriting. They also can't invest directly in companies, as Japanese banks have done with great success.

Banks are feeling the hot breath of competition from such financial giants as American Express and Sears, Roebuck, which aren't hampered by Glass-Steagall. Their one-stop shops are taking more and more business away from banks. Sears, for example, owns a brokerage house (Dean Witter), sells insurance (Allstate), offers a national credit card (Discover), and sells real estate (Coldwell Banker). It even takes deposits through so-called nonbank banks that don't make commercial loans.

And as if domestic competi-

global trends

Building a New Approach

LINKOPING—Since World War II, housing and construction have been havens for Sweden's socialist planners. In the heyday of planning in the 1960s, a number of trade-union-controlled construction companies merged to form the BPA company, which became the third-largest construction firm in Sweden.

The BPA undertook an ambitious program of major construction projects abroad—and lost hundreds of millions of crowns. The late Swedish prime minister, Olaf Palme, had to bail his trade-union friends out of a disastrous project in Algeria by giving extra development aid to the Algerian government—aid that soon found its way into BPA's coffers.

Trade-union leaders eventually became fed up with losing money and decided to hire a managing director instead of running the show themselves. In 1981, they hired Mr. Göran Lövgren, who took the job on the condition that he be free to run the company as a commercial enterprise, without trade-union or political interference. The desperate BPA board of directors agreed.

Six years later, BPA is a commercial success. To raise capital, Lövgren issued new shares in the company, 40 percent of which were bought by BPA employees at 50 crowns a piece, raising a total of 50 million crowns. Later these shares were traded on Stockholm's over-the-counter market and were selling at 170 crowns, for a 240 percent increase. Not surprisingly, the socialist trade-union employees of BPA have capitalist thoughts these days.

—Carl G. Holm

Lite Taxes: America's Contribution To the World's New Taste

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE a little competition—even among pickpockets. Under the new tax law, the United States now has the lowest tax rates of any major industrialized nation, and it's got the rest of the world hopping aboard. With top corporate rates down from 46 percent last year to 34 percent, and top individual rates dropping in stages from 50 percent to 28 percent (for most, but not all), the United States has become a worldwide tax haven. Other industrialized countries, in an effort to keep their productive citizens and corporate capital at home, are responding with their own tax cuts.

According to *Fortune* magazine, the risk of losing highly paid scientific and business talent to the United States is greatest for high-tax countries where English is the primary language, such as Canada, Britain, and Australia. Canadian tax planners, for example, now want to lower their country's top rates of 50 percent for corporations and 55 percent for individuals. Peter Daniel, assistant deputy minister of finance, confessed to *Fortune*, "There's no question we're concerned about companies and individuals moving to the U.S. We're going to do what we have to do to remain competitive."

In Europe, the U.S. tax-cutting example has bolstered the determination of politicians who had already made or proposed tax cuts. Britain's Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher is trying hard to take a few percentage points off the lowest (yes, *lowest*) rate of 29 percent. She's got plenty of incentive: 95 percent of British taxpayers fall into that bracket.

Some governments have already slashed their taxes. Singapore, for example, dropped its corporate rate from 40 percent to 33 percent last spring. And French Premier Jacques Chirac's conservative coalition has chopped the top corporate rate from 50 percent to 45 percent and the top individual rate from 65 percent to 58 percent over the last year. Finance Minister Edouard Balladur has reaffirmed the government's commitment to getting the top personal rate down to 50 percent within a few years.

And it's not just conservatives. In Austria's national elections last November, the major parties competed with tax proposals. Even the ruling Socialist Party abandoned its Marxist position on taxes and called for reducing marginal rates. "There's been a shift in *all* of Austria's hidebound parties," noted the *Wall Street Journal*.

As a result of this "festival of reform," notes *Fortune*, individuals in almost all of the world's major economies within a few years are likely to face marginal rates no higher than 50%." Granted, governments would still be skimming off half. But "a decade ago, when top rates typically soared between 70% and 80%, such a prospect would have seemed politically impossible, if not fiscally irresponsible."

But then the United States got on the cutting edge.

Global Roundup

■ *Sunrise on Soviet moonlighters.* For the first time since the 1920s, the Soviet Union will allow limited private enterprise in such services as shoe repair, taxi driving, and small-scale construction and agriculture. The law, part of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's attempt to revitalize the economy, is designed to alleviate the acute shortages and delays that plague the consumer economy.

■ *Freedom of contract.* In one of the few nations in the world where divorce is prohibited, Argentina's Supreme Court has declared unconstitutional a law that allowed couples to separate legally but not to remarry. The court ruled that divorce and remarriage are constitutional rights.

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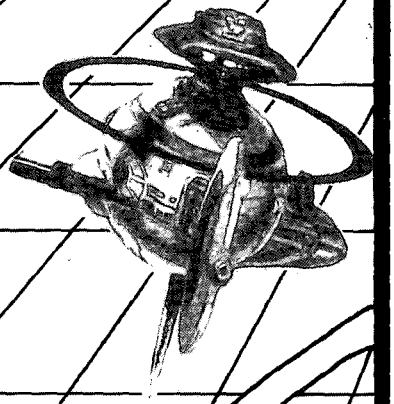

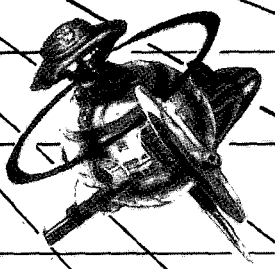

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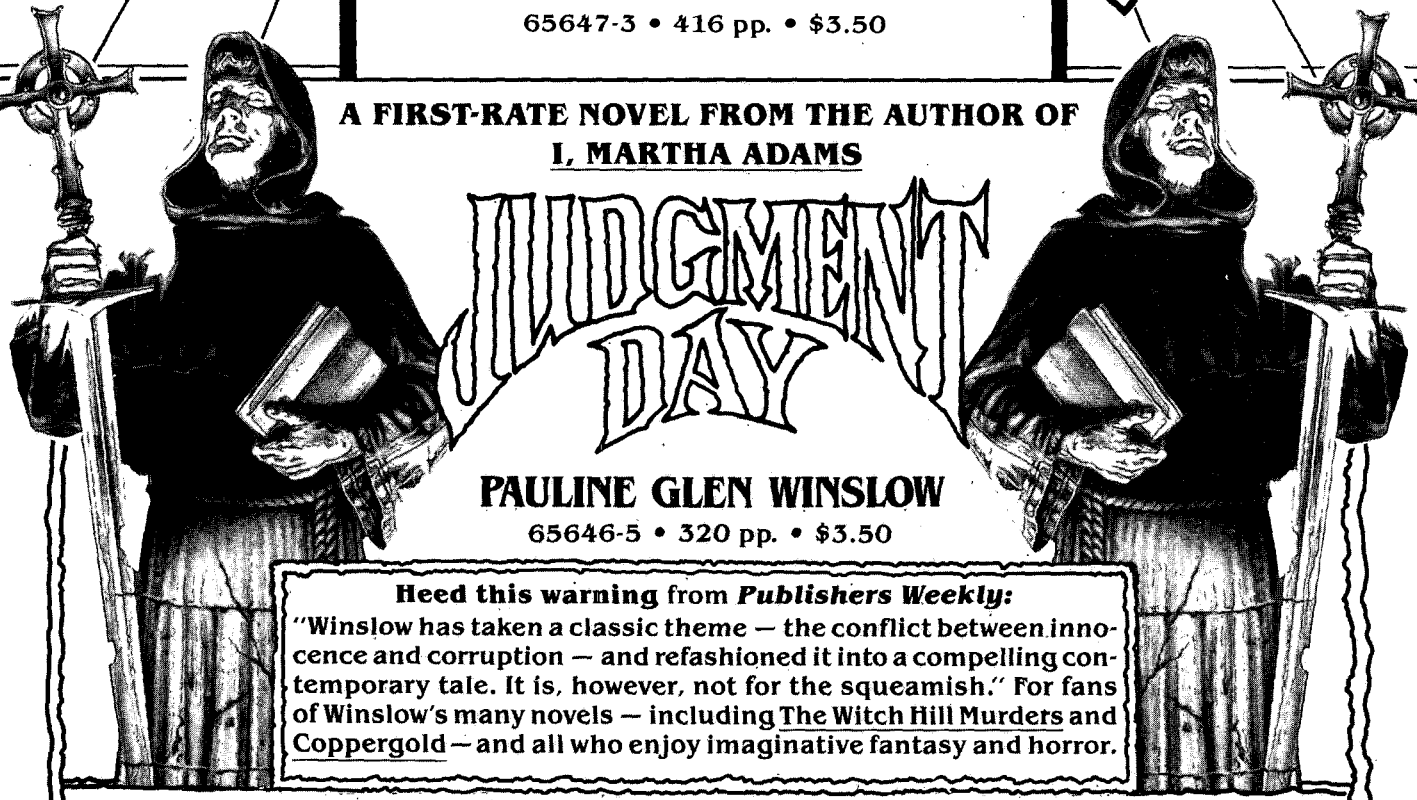

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tion weren't enough, banks have the Japanese to worry about. In 1970, seven U.S. banks were among the world's 25 largest; now only three make the list, compared to 13 Japanese banks. The Japan-based Sumitomo Bank, for example, has agreed to buy a large stake in the investment banking house Goldman Sachs; such a purchase would be illegal for U.S. banks, which aren't allowed to buy securities firms.

"We can't do business today with yesterday's regulations and expect to be in business tomorrow," Joseph Pinola, chairman of California's First Interstate Bancorp recently told the *Miami Herald*. "Unless we somehow get our act together legislatively, we are going to continue to suffer."

Help may come from the Reagan administration's Task Force on Regulatory Relief, chaired by Vice-President George Bush. But if that doesn't work, there's always a do-it-yourself option.

Thomas Labrecque, president of Chase Manhattan: *Ready to drop out of the system?*

Thomas Labrecque, president of Chase Manhattan, flabbergasted his fellow bankers at their 1986 convention when he suggested that banks might just have to drop out of the bank system, becoming nonbank banks themselves. At a posh reception hosted by Chase, the *Miami Herald* reported, Labrecque told the crowd, "We either get change or people are going to have to look at giving up their bank charter."

Next thing you know, they'll be wondering why they need a charter in the first place.

Conservative Organ Pipes Up Against the Drug War

Amidst the huffing and puffing of the war on drugs, liberty seems to have gained some friends in unusual places. Most encouraging to opponents of the government's futile prohibition was a December cover story in *National Review*, the largest-circulation conservative journal in the land (and reportedly one of President Reagan's favorites). Although *NR* founder William F. Buckley has lately called for legalizing heretofore illegal substances, free-lancer Richard C. Cowan's "A War Against Ourselves: How the Narcs Created Crack," accompanied by Richard Vigilante's "Reaganites at Risk," nevertheless came as a pleasant surprise.

Cowan used elemental economic analysis of the sort one would presume the Adam Smith tiewearers of the Reagan administration are familiar with to show why "the government itself ...has been one of the most potent causes" of the drug problem. Not only does prohibition enable organized crime to control the drug business, noted Cowan, but it actually encourages the substitution of harder,

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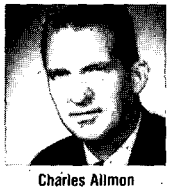
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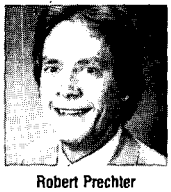
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more dangerous drugs for less potent ones like marijuana.

Because marijuana is bulky to transport, thus increasing the chance of arrest, drug traffickers are turning to contraband that is more easily concealed. And, wrote Cowan, by concentrating their efforts on relatively harmless marijuana—more than half of all drug busts are for marijuana possession—the narcotics bureaucrats may actually be pushing people toward harder drugs.

Often lost in the hysteria surrounding the war on drugs is the extent to which the government is violating the fundamental American rights that our forefathers took for granted. Declared Cowan: "The existing and proposed laws constitute the basic elements of a socialist police state. There are already controls on cash and capital transfers, calls for the canceling of hundred-dollar bills, violations of the long-standing principle of lawyer-client confidentiality, and the authority to seize the accused's property *before* a trial or even *after* acquittal."

Few conservatives are yet willing to echo Cowan's argument in public. As Richard Vigilante noted in the same issue of *National Review*, "Most conservative politicians have behaved irresponsibly on the drug issue, panicking in the face of a media-created crisis, attempting to expand government powers to do for the reckless what they might refuse to do for the poor: protect them from themselves." An exception, he noted, is Republican Phil Crane (Ill.), who joined 15 liberal Democrats in voting against the House's profligate and statist antidrug bill last Congress.

The drug war, Vigilante warned *NR*'s conservative readers, "violates not merely the abstract symbols of civil liberties beloved of left-wing intellectuals; it violates genuinely important rights in ways Americans have not in the past been disposed to tolerate." Baby boomers in particular are not likely "to tolerate in their thirties and forties harassment they rejected in their teens and twenties," yet such harassment and punishment of casual users is inevitable if the war on drugs is to succeed.

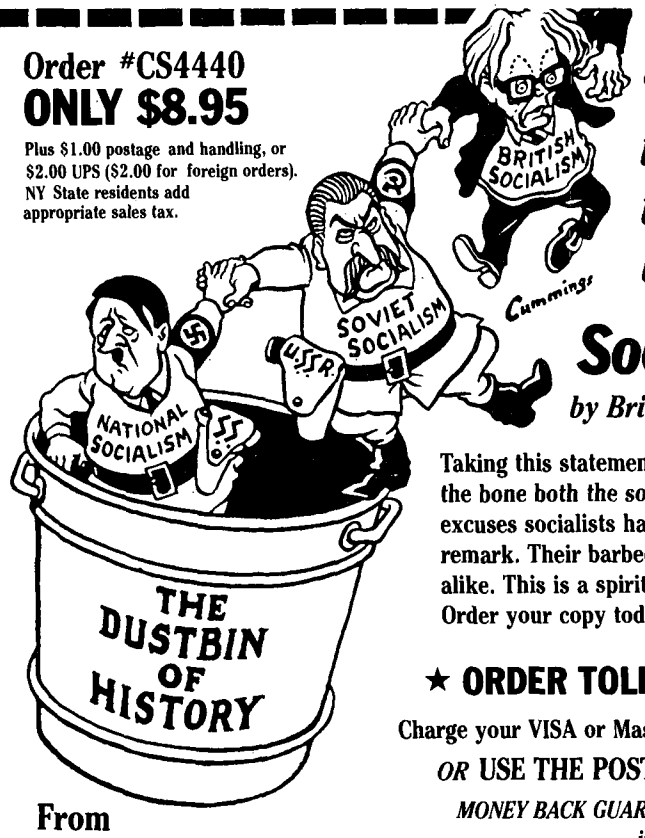
If the government persists in the costly and pernicious war on drugs, Cowan predicted, "we are not going to be drug-free, just unfree." *National Review*'s willingness to provide a forum for the conservative case against prohibition may someday be seen as a landmark on a different path.

Milestones

■ *Changing a double nickel.* The federally mandated 55 mph speed limit (all who obey, raise your hands) has encountered yet more opposition. The American Drivers Association, a new grass-roots group based in Palm Desert, California, charges that "the value of 55 is a myth and promises to fight the good fight for its repeal.

■ *State off the wagon.* New legislation in Iowa has ended the state government's 50-year-old, $125-million monopoly on liquor stores. Iowa was one of 18 states in the direct liquor-sales business. The new law calls for the stores, which have poured $50 million a year into the state's coffers, to be sold by July. Legislator Ed Parker, the law's sponsor, says there will probably be a move within a few years to get the state out of the wholesale business as well.

—Robert W. Poole, Jr. Lucy Braun, Bill Kauffman, and Virginia I. Postrel



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Is the flute too exciting? Does the waltz corrupt? Is jazz indecent?

Rock music is a purveyor of drugs, alcoholism, fornication, adultery, necrophilia, beastiality [sic], homosexuality and every other debilitating influence....It is satanic....In a more subtle way, country music is just as bad.

—Evangelist Jimmy Swaggart

Music hath more than the power to charm wild beasts; according to some people, it can drive the beast in you wild.

After Jimmy Swaggart denounced Wal-Mart stores in a televised sermon condemning rock music, Wal-Mart leaped on the bluenose bandwagon. Just days later—and less than two weeks after the Meese pornography commission's call for a porn purge—Wal-Mart ordered the removal of certain records and rock-oriented magazines (including *Rolling Stone*) from its 900 stores.

Wal-Mart spokesmen later said Swaggart had nothing to do with the decision, though the company did ask for a copy of the sermon and Swaggart relishes taking responsibility for this moral enlightenment. (As in the case of 7-Eleven and other convenience stores being browbeaten into removing *Playboy* and *Penthouse* from their racks, intimidation tactics often reveal deep reservoirs of timidity among the nation's retailers.)

The current knee-jerk, overreactive surge of antimusic mania, fueled by preachers, "concerned parents," and exploitative politicians, may seem like something dreadfully new, a threat unparalleled in world history. In fact, the hysteria is as old as music itself. As Tolstoy said: "The older generation almost always fails to understand the younger one—they think their own immutable values the only ones....And so the older generation barks like a dog at what they

And what about Madonna?... Stay tuned for the latest episode of "Ban That Tune"!

Rock Me with a Steady Roll

by **Leo N. Miletich**

don't understand." The barking has been going on a long time.

Sing of good things, not bad,
*Sing of happy, not sad.**
—Joe Raposo, "Sing"

In the fourth century before Christ, Greek historian Ephorus warned, "Music was invented to deceive and delude mankind." This suspicion is reflected in the works of Aristotle ("The flute is not an instrument which has a good moral effect; it is too exciting") and Plato ("Musical innovation is full of danger to the State, for when modes of music change, the laws of the State always change with them"). The centuries that followed featured variations on those themes.

In 1572 a Vienna ordinance on public dancing laid down the law: "Ladies and maidens are to compose themselves with chastity and modesty and the male persons are to refrain from whirling and other such frivolities."

By 1595 "voluptuous turning, jumping, or running hither and yon" were also banned. (Apparently, "hither" was snuggling somewhere beneath the bandstand while "yon" was out in the dark Vienna woods.) A sermon of the time denounced dancers for "letting themselves be swung aroung and allowing themselves to be kissed and mauled about....They cannot be honest while each entices the other to harlotry and offers a sop to the devil."

In *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage*, Jeremy Collier (1650-1726) decreed that "Musick is almost as dangerous as Gunpowder; and it may be requires looking after....'Tis possible a publick Regulation might not be amiss."

And in *An Irreverent and Thoroughly Incomplete Social History of Almost Everything*, Frank Muir describes the effect of

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WORLDWIDE

BETTMANN NEWSPHOTOS

Who said it? "It is from the popular song that the popular suggestive dances spring. Together and apart, they are a menace to the social fabric." Was it evangelist Jimmy Swaggart (top)? Senator's wife and meddling mom Tipper Gore? Or conservative Senator Jesse Helms? The answer may surprise you.

the waltz when it was introduced into England from Germany in 1812: "Guardians of public morality immediately pronounced the waltz to be 'will-corrupting,' 'disgusting,' 'immodest'; an 'outright romp in which the couples not only embrace throughout the dance but, flushed and palpitating, whirl about in the posture of copulation.' "

In 1957, Meredith Wilson's *The Music Man* had Professor Harold Hill warning the people of River City, Iowa, about the evils inherent in ragtime (but you'll have to go listen to the record; permission to quote the passage was denied). Contemporary audiences laughed, but in fact, ragtime—perhaps because of its origins in bawdyhouse parlors, performed by itinerant black musicians like Jelly Roll Morton and Scott Joplin—was no joke at the turn of the century.

The *Musical Courier* exclaimed in 1899: "A wave of vulgar, filthy and suggestive music has inundated the land. Nothing but ragtime prevails, and the cake-walk with its obscene posturings, its lewd gestures....Our children, our young men and women are continually exposed to its contiguity, to the monotonous attrition of this vulgarizing music. It is artistically and morally depressing and should be suppressed by press and pulpit."

I am heartily in favor of a board of censorship for the unspeakably depraved modern popular song. Its effect on young folk is shocking. The vicious song is allowed in the home by parents, who, no doubt, have not troubled themselves to look at the words. As a result, the suggestive meanings are allowed to play upon immature minds at a dangerous age. It is from the popular song that the popular suggestive dances spring. Together and apart, they are a menace to the social fabric.

Pop Quiz: The above quote was delivered by:

(a) Jimmy Swaggart
(b) Jerry Falwell
(c) Jesse Helms
(d) Tipper Gore

To would-be censors, the social fabric is always on the brink of unraveling. The answer to the pop quiz is: (e) None of the above. That hysterical call for musical censorship came from violinist Maude Powell, speaking before the National Federation of Musical Clubs in Chicago—in 1913. A whole lot of unraveling hasn't happened yet.

Four years later, the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* editorialized against what is now a trademark of its city. Jazz, said the paper's June 17 issue, "is the indecent story syncopated and counterpointed," a form of "musical vice" with no value, "and its possibilities of harm are great."

Meanwhile, back on the Continent, things weren't going too well either. Friedrich Nietzsche wrote of the music of Richard Wagner: "He contaminates everything he touches—he had made music sick."

In *Degeneration*, critic Max Nordau accused Wagner's music of things Jimmy Swaggart might only imagine while in the throes of religious ecstacy: "The lovers of his pieces behave like tom-cats gone mad, rolling in contortions and convulsions over a root of valerian. They reflect a state of mind which is...a form of Sadism. It is the love of those degenerates who, in sexual transport become like wild beasts...which leads coarse nature to murder and lust."

Morris L. Ernst advanced the appropriate defense against such attacks. Fighting censorship of a play in 1930 which had been banned for its E-flat background music, Ernst asked: "Was there such a thing as a special gonadic key? Or did each person have a special key? Or were extroverts susceptible to one key and introverts to another?" The music was approved.

In 1986 the parents of a teenage boy who killed himself while listening to heavy-metal rocker Ozzy Osbourne's "Suicide Solution" sued the singer. They argued that a low-noise hum on the record had a disturbing influence on the boy and made him lyrically pliable. The courts recently dismissed the suit, giving First Amendment protection to the song. Thanks to the ruling, listeners are now responsible for their own behavior.

The Osbourne case was not the first time music has been said to cause suicide. There was a trend, of a sort, in "death rock" in the early '60s, epitomized by morbid teen songs like "Deadman's Curve" and "Last Kiss."

But before death rock came "Gloomy Sunday." According to David Ewen's *All the Years of American Popular Music*, the song was "promoted by its publishers as a 'suicide song' because it was reputed to

The mouth that roared: Heavy-metal singer Ozzy Osbourne (above) was sued by parents of a teenager who killed himself while listening to Osbourne's song "Suicide Solution." A sensible judge threw out the case.

The saucy lyrics of Cole Porter (above) made him one of the most frequently banned composers of the modern age. Billie Holiday (right) recorded the so-called suicide song "Gloomy Sunday."

have encouraged the suicidal tendencies of the tormented and the harassed of the early thirties." Written by Rezso Seress and translated by Sam M. Lewis, "Gloomy Sunday" was an import from equally gloomy Hungary. Billie Holiday recorded it in 1936 after it had been widely sung in concerts by Paul Robeson.

From that somber dirge of the Great Depression, America leaped into the "swing" era—and that too was roundly condemned. On October 25, 1938, the Archbishop of Dubuque, the Most Reverend Francis J. L. Beckman, labeled the swing music of Benny Goodman and others "a degenerated and demoralizing musical system" that had been "turned loose to gnaw away the moral fiber of young people." William E. Miles reports in *Damn It!* that the cleric told his flock that "jam sessions, jitterbugs and cannibalistic rhythmic orgies are wooing our youth along the primrose path to Hell!"

One of the most actively banned composers of the modern age was Cole Porter. From his first 1928 hits, "Let's Do It" and "Let's Misbehave," Porter's saucy lyrics have been deleted and banned with amazing consistency. "I get no kick from champagne" was originally "I get no kick from cocaine," but that was deemed too strong for the mass audience. "I'm a Gigolo," "You've Got That Thing," "My Heart Belongs to Daddy," and "Love for Sale" were often attacked and kept off the airwaves.

Rodgers and Hammerstein also came in for Hollywood cleansing. In the 1956 version of *Carousel*, "My Boy Bill" was sanitized and its impact lessened when "damn" was changed to "darn" and "skinny-lipped virgin" to "skinny-lipped lady."

When Porter's *Out of This World* opened in Boston in 1950, the licensing division of the mayor's office sent a letter to the theater demanding the removal of "all irreverent use of 'God,' " various costume changes to render them "less suggestive," and the dropping of a lyric line that went, "saving my urgin's for vestal virgins." Also, the "ballet at end of Act 1 to be greatly modified" and the song lyric "goosing me" eliminated. The letter ended with a thanks for the theater's "past cooperation."

But at a congressional debate in 1957 about network censoring of Stephen Foster songs ("darkies" and other such terms being by then seen as racial slurs), Rep. Frank Chelf left his old Kentucky home to remind his colleagues: "Whenever any group of people in this nation, or any other nation, take it upon themselves to set up rules and regulations by and through which they can arbitrarily control what songs shall or shall not be heard—and get away with it—then they can censor speech, censor religion, censor or even control the press."

If we are to change every song that has something in it that somebody does not like, there are not enough rewrite men in America to even get the project started.

—Rep. Frank Chelf

When rock and roll burst upon the scene, it almost immediately became the censors' prime target. Elvis and his twitching, pumping pelvis; almost anything by the Rolling Stones; even the insipid "Puff, the Magic Dragon" by Peter, Paul, and Mary became the focus of conservative outrage.

"Puff," the 1963 flip side of "Blowin' in the Wind," was interpreted as a metaphorical celebration of pot smoking. As late as 1972 this was still a live issue—a radio station I worked for received angry letters when we played an *instrumental* version of the song. Ironically, ol' Puff is now a cartoon dragon seen on Saturday morning television.

Those who think that contemporary rock has gone "too far" along whatever personal highway to hell they're monitoring ought to look back 20 years—to the heyday of The Fugs. The name came from Norman Mailer's euphemism "Fug you" in *The Naked and the Dead*. Lillian Roxon's *Rock Encyclopedia* describes the group as "freaky-looking poets" from New York's East Village who "went out of their way to be 'offensive.' " She calls them "comics and satirists" and likens them to Lenny Bruce. It was, she notes, "like Henry Miller's novels set to music."

The Fugs's titles included: "Boobs a Lot," "Group Grope," "Dirty Old Man," "Kill For Peace," "New Amphet Amine Shriek," "I Command the House of the Devil," "Coca Cola Douche," "Wet Dream," "I Saw the Best Minds of My Generation Rot," and "Exorcising the Evil Spirits from the Pentagon." All prior to 1970.

It could probably be argued that Richard Nixon's Watergate exploits had a more disastrous influence on public ethics and morality in the '70s than did the music of The Fugs in the '60s or AC/DC in the '80s. And will be remembered longer.

Still, as Jimmy Swaggart's ministry has proven, some people will believe anything if it's screeched at them from a pulpit. In April 1986, according to the American Library Association's *Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom*, the Reverends Steven W. Timmons of Beloit, Wisconsin, and William A. Riedel, pastor of the Westwood United Pentecostal Church in Jackson, Michigan, spoke hell-

Sure Mick Jagger and Keith Richards (top) like to play the bad boys, but how can anyone expect Peter, Paul, and Mary or squeaky clean Abba to undermine civilization?

raising sermons against "satanic" rock groups. Named as part of Lucifer's legion were such innocuous songsmiths as Abba, The Eagles, Stevie Nicks, and "probably the most powerful figure in this," John Denver.

Timmons told a flock of young people that "Rocky Mountain High" teaches "witchcraft." (But wasn't it Sinatra who recorded "Witchcraft"? Or maybe it was "That Old Black Magic"? Or "That Old Devil Moon"?) The parishioners, worked up to a lather, buried a batch of rock records (and some Harlequin romance novels) under a tombstone that reads, "Never to rise again."

That same month, down in Ohio, a South Point evangelist named Jim Brown told his congregation that the theme song of TV's "Mr. Ed" contains hidden messages from Satan. He says he played the song backwards and heard, "the source is Satan." While singing "Oh, How I Love Jesus," the sappy psalmsters set about burning rock and country records and tapes. (If you want to check out the devil in Mr. Ed without rewiring your $1,200 Mitsubishi, use a reel-to-reel tape deck. Record the suspect song on the tape and then, without rewinding, take off the reels and place them on the opposite spindles. Then hit "Play.")

You hear what you listen for, of course. But it's a certainty that if it was possible to put backwards messages on records and have them subliminally influence forward-thinking listeners, people like Swaggart would be loading gospel records with injunctions to "Praise the Lord" and "Send the Money."

If we think to regulate Printing, thereby to rectify manners, we must regulate all recreations and passions, all that is delightful to man....And who shall silence all airs and madrigals?

—John Milton

In 1985 there emerged a new group of neopuritans enraged by song lyrics and album art—the Parents Music Resource Center (PMRC). All of its founders were mothers (in the biological sense, of course), and all were well connected to powerful politicians—even to the unseemly extreme of sleeping with them (though only in the Meese pornography commission's preferred state of conjugal bliss).

Lucifer's legions? One preacher called John Denver (above) "the most powerful figure" in satanic rock. Another declared that the "Mr. Ed" theme song praises Satan when played backwards.

Like the porn commission's emphasis on the most shocking kinds of smut, the record molesters circulate copies of the most explicit rock lyrics in order to work people up to a froth of indignation. While it's certainly true that "offensive," as Vladimir Nabokov said, "is frequently but a synonym for 'unusual,' " this stuff is as warped as a disk left in the trunk on a hot summer day. Just look at this filth:

I'm wild about that thing,
It makes me to laugh and sing.
Give it to me, papa,
I'm wild about that thing.

Give ev'ry bit of it else I'll die,
I'm wild about that thing.

What's the matter, papa?
Please don't stall!
Don't you know I love it
And I wants it all!

Yes, give my bell a ring,
You press my button,
I'm wild about that thing.
Mmmmm, if you want to satisfy my soul,
Come on and rock me with a steady roll,
I'm wild about that thing.

And what about this one from the same depraved singer:

Lovin' is the thing I crave
For your love I'd be your slave,
You gotta give me some....
Said Mrs. Jones to ol' Butcher Pete,
I want a piece of your good ol' meat...
I crave your round steak,
You gotta give me some.

Why, if that song reached the tender ears of our young people, our whole value system would collapse like...uh, just a second...I'm sorry, those aren't on the PMRC list. They were recorded by Bessie Smith in 1929.

Okay, this one's a rocker, and one feminists hate: "Honey, come in this house and stop all that yakety-yak. / Don't make me nervous cause I'm holdin' a baseball bat."* Clearly a call for female degradation and violent wife abuse! Has this singer no shame? Your guess is as good as mine: it was recorded in the late 1950s by Pat Boone, who now spends much of his time lobbying for prayer in the public schools.

*"Honey Hush" by Lou Willie Turner
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Speaking of violent imagery in oft-heard songs, sample this lyric: "The havoc of war and the battle's confusion...their blood has washed out their foul footsteps' pollution." That's verse three; you might be more familiar with verse one, which includes: "And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air."

It's bad enough that our national anthem is set to the tune of a rowdy beer-drinking song—such a bad example for impressionable youth—but to encourage them to sing of such violent goings-on might inspire them to who-knows-what murderous actions!

It becomes obvious that if you really want to shield kids from sex and violence —from life itself—*everything* better have a warning label on it. And if music is going to be blamed for antisocial behavior, you'd better ban the Bible too. On August 22, 1986, an 18-year-old Miami high-school student named Alejandro Martinez stabbed his grandmother to death. He told police she interrupted him while he was reading the Bible and he thought she was the devil. For the well-being of the world's grandmothers, better prohibit sales of that book to minors.

But there's at least one cry common to all would-be censors, the PMRC being no exception: they all claim they are not censors. In a letter to *Film Comment*, Tipper Gore, cofounder of PMRC and the wife of Sen. Albert Gore (D-Tenn.), responded to the charge of advocating censorship by flatly claiming, "We are doing just the opposite." All PMRC wants, she wrote, is lyrics printed on the outside of albums that will allow "consumers to know what they are getting before they buy it." (Given the nature of kids, the dirtiest albums will thus be assured of brisk sales.)

Despite Mrs. Gore's protests to the contrary, though, PMRC actions suggest a desire for censorship. For one thing, she was successful in getting the Senate Commerce Committee to hold a widely publicized hearing on rock lyrics, at which rockers Frank Zappa, Dee Snider of the band Twisted Sister, and John Denver defended the First Amendment against a horde of outraged senators. That's called government intimidation of artists.

Mrs. Gore later told *Newsweek*, "We're determined to wipe out the pervasive message in music that to be hip and cool you have to have sex." Wipe out, as in eradicate, as in throttle and suppress that idea before anyone can express or hear it. That's called censorship.

Another thing would-be censors have in common is that they never stop at the most lurid examples of what they find offensive but keep redrawing their line (like Libya's "Line of Death") ever backwards, from satanism to heavy petting. "Consider Madonna," wrote syndicated columnist Michael J. McManus in August 1985. "She mocks virginity and Christianity!" As if she doesn't have a right to! Shakespeare mocked virginity (*All's Well That Ends Well*); should he too be censored?

Bob Dylan (above) came in for neopuritan criticism not for his protest songs but for a born-again number praising Jesus.

And in *America*, a Catholic-oriented magazine, Richard W. Chilson quoted a Bob Dylan lyric that "praised his savior as 'a shot of love.' Anyone who knows and loves the man from Galilee," wrote Chilson (who obviously neither knows nor loves poetic vision) "should find this image scandalous and obscene." Obscenity, according to the Supreme Court, can be legally banned. Bye bye, Dylan.

There is perhaps no phenomenon which contains so much destructive feeling as moral indignation, which permits envy or hate to be acted out under the guise of virtue.

—Eric Fromm

Lewd and obscene waltzes; scandalous ragtime and jazz; showtunes and blues red-penciled by bluenoses; Mr. Ed an agent of Satan; John Denver a warlock. Truly, it's a depressing catalog of narrow-minded boobery at work. Censors are people disturbed by what they perceive around them, who either don't understand the problem or who have manufactured a problem where none exists. They don't know what else to do but feel they have to do *something*. And censorship (no matter what other name they give it) of what they find offensive seems so quick, so easy. Out of sight, out of mind. You might just as well ban cars because some people drive drunk.

Calls for banning this or that seem to occur in cycles. There are clots of oversensitive, overreactive people in every generation, people resistant to and scared by change. Instead of thinking for themselves, they'll let their self-appointed leaders do it for them.

Thinking for yourself *is* dangerous. It carries with it the possibility of error as well as the weight of personal responsibility. For some people, that's too heavy a burden. They certainly have the right to denounce anything they don't like. But when they move to take what they don't like away from you, away from me, that's un-American. That's censorship.

If I could choose one song lyric to play for the censors, it would be Maxwell Anderson's "How Can You Tell An American," from the 1938 stage musical *Knickerbocker Holiday*:

> It's just that he hates and eternally despises
> The policeman on his beat, and the judge with his assizes,
> The sheriff with his warrants and the bureaucratic crew,
> For the sole and simple reason that they tell him what to do.
> And he insists on eating,
> He insists on drinking,
> He insists on reading,
> He insists on thinking—
> Free of governmental snooping or a governmental plan,
> And that's an American!†

Or would that song now be banned as fostering disrespect for law and authority? ◻

Leo N. Miletich is a writer and former disk jockey whose work has appeared in Cosmos, Playboy, *and* The Library Journal, *among others.*

Photographs by Erica Lansner

John Chamberlain

A quick look at the friends John Chamberlain has made in his six-decade career as literary critic, journalist, and columnist—from novelist John Dos Passos to Time-Life *kingpin Henry Luce to aviator Charles Lindbergh—suggests that (a) Chamberlain has a winning personality, and (b) the guy's been around.*

Yale graduate John Chamberlain came to national attention when he became the New York Times*'s first daily—that's right,* daily, *as in five days a week—book reviewer in the 1930s. A rigorous job, surely, but his crisp, concise style led Yale professor William Lyon Phelps to anoint him the "finest critic of his generation."*

Like so many young literary men of his day, Chamberlain developed an interest in politics, where he displayed vaguely socialist sympathies. In 1936 he left the Times *for a job at the business magazine* Fortune. *Associations with* Life, Barron's, *and the* Wall Street Journal, *among others, followed. During this time his politics evolved from "socialism to...a nonstatist voluntarism." He also began to abandon his prewar isolationism and, as he became increasingly involved in the nascent conservative movement, championed a more aggressive foreign policy.*

After the war, Chamberlain joined with individualist writers Henry Hazlitt and Suzanne La Follette in launching The Freeman, *a fortnightly intended to serve as the voice of the emergent coalition of conservatives and libertarians opposed to the reigning liberalism. The journal soon self-destructed in a series of internecine conflicts. A couple years later, William F. Buckley, Jr., launched* National Review*; Chamberlain served as lead book reviewer in its early years.*

He has been a fixture in the conservative movement ever since. He still writes a twice-weekly syndicated newspaper column for King Features and does monthly book reviews for a metamorphosed Freeman. *His wife, Ernestine, teaches dance aesthetics and criticism at New York University.*

The critic Clifton Fadiman, in a 1936 Saturday Review *profile of his friend Chamberlain, ventured the guess that "like so many gently nurtured, college-bred Americans, he will never really look old." Now 83 and a bit gray around the temples, Chamberlain laughs when reminded of Fadiman's prophecy. It is a very young laugh.*

John Chamberlain was interviewed in his New York City office by REASON editor Bill Kauffman.

Reason: Was newspaper life in the '20s and '30s as hard-drinking and fast as *Front Page* legend would have it?

Chamberlain: It depended on what paper you worked for. If you worked for the *Times*, which I did, you worked with some very sober people. If you worked for the *Daily News* it was a little bit different. The *Front Page* was a caricature of things. It certainly wasn't universally true for New York, where you had 17 papers. They weren't all drunks.

Reason: You were a daily book reviewer for three years with the *Times*?

Chamberlain: I did a five-times-a-week book review for three years, from '33 to '36. Then I left and went to work for *Fortune*. In '41 I left *Fortune* and free-lanced three times a week for the *Times* for three more years.

Reason: How does one do a daily book review? Do you just read the back flap and take it from there?

Chamberlain: No. You can read the whole book if you get up early enough. Read crossing Times Square. Read on the subway and on weekends. It can be done.

Reason: It doesn't leave you any time for pleasure reading, does it?

Chamberlain: I don't advise it! You don't have any fun reading. You learn to read subjects and verbs and skip the adjectives. You discover you don't remember an awful lot about what you read three or four days later.

Reason: Correct me if I'm wrong, but I think you at least flirted with Trotskyism in the '30s didn't you? You started out on the left...

Chamberlain: I was never a Trotskyite, no. I got roped into the Trotsky camp because I wanted him to have asylum in Mexico. I think I said I was a socialist. I didn't really believe in socialism, but I thought capitalism was going to fail.

Reason: Why do you think so many bright young people during the '20s and '30s, the '30s in particular, were attracted to socialism or even communism? The American Communist Party was pretty popular in intellectual circles.

Chamberlain: I think back to some of my friends who became Communists temporarily, like a girl I knew. She went into the voting booth one day and she'd lost her job or something and just got mad and punched the Communist lever. I don't know how sincerely Communist that was.

Reason: Did you sense in the early '30s that there was a great camaraderie among the writers and among those who came of age right after World War I—the Lost Generation?

Chamberlain: There was a great sense of adventure and discovery of Europe in those days. You can get that from Malcolm Cowley's books and *The Sun Also Rises*. I went to France as an undergraduate, two summers. It was marvelous, a whole new world, a lot of French novels. I became a European buff for a while.

Reason: At the same time, you've written that America seemed much freer. More wide open spaces, or...

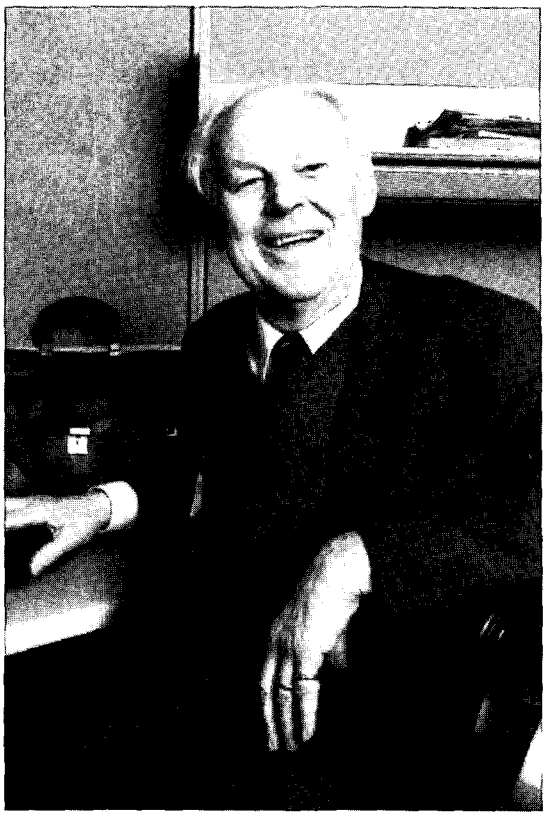
Chamberlain: Well, I got out of school and I didn't want to go to college. My mom said, "You gotta go to work. Where you wanna go?" I said California. So I worked on my father's furniture truck for three months to get some money and went to California.

Reason: How'd you get there? Hitchhike?

Chamberlain: Part of the way. I went with another fellow I went to school with. We hitchhiked across a bit of Texas. I got a job in an orange grove packing oranges. I thought that was wonderful, outdoors and everything. One day the orange grove owner came to me and said, "I've got to let you go. My Mexican foreman says these are jobs for Mexicans." So I was a victim of reverse discrimination. I did a lot of hiking in California and climbed mountains and went to see Palm Springs. Went to the Grand Canyon. I never had any sense that America was anything but very free. You could hitchhike up in the San Joaquin Valley and nobody bothered you, you weren't mugged.

Reason: Very recently, Stalin's forced famine in the Ukraine in the 1930s has come to light. One of the villains in all this is a guy named Walter Duranty, who was a *New York Times* reporter at the time who, for whatever reason, didn't report on this even though he knew of it. Did you know Duranty?

Chamberlain: Yeah. I had a funny run-in with him. He came back to New York for a visit and in the elevator he said something about three million people died in a famine in the Ukraine. He'd never written that. And I referred to that obliquely in a review of a book called *Escape from the Soviets* by someone named Tatiana Tchernavina. The *New Masses*, I remember, picked up on it and tried to make an issue of it. Duranty denied having said it. He had to get his visa, I think, to get back to Russia. Fortunately, Simeon Strunsky, a *Times* editorial writer who used to do Topics of the Times, heard him say it too. So my neck was saved.



I never had any sense that America was anything but very free. You could hitchhike up in the San Joaquin Valley and nobody bothered you, you weren't mugged.

Reason: How did your evolution from free-lance socialist to individualist conservative come about? Was there some lightning-strike or...

Chamberlain: No, a lot of things happened that you couldn't like. The Moscow trials, and the Ukraine famine, and Communists trying to break up meetings in New York—socialist meetings, in the days when socialists were "social fascists." One thing after another happened, and then Hitler and Stalin signed their pact. That was the last straw for a lot of people.

Reason: All those things could convert one to anticommunism. How did your evolution to appreciation for a free market, rather than anticommunist socialism, come about?

Chamberlain: Two or three books, I think. Rose Wilder Lane's *Discovery of Freedom*, Isabel Paterson's *The God of the Machine*, and Peter Drucker's *The Future of Industrial Man*. All of these were very convincing. Then I went to work for *Fortune* and did corporation stories. I discovered that corporations weren't all of a piece, and I discovered that there was competition.

Reason: Your career has spanned almost six decades, and it seems like you've known everyone who was ever born in this country. What was Charles Lindbergh like?

Chamberlain: He wasn't who he was supposed to be or what Roosevelt thought he was.

Reason: Which was pro-Nazi?

Chamberlain: Which was pro-Nazi. He was always very meticulous. He tried to exhaust a subject. It was hard talking—hard conversing—with him because he wanted to cover every last inch of territory. You could see why. He said he didn't like skiing because in the business in which he'd grown up, you could only fall once. I can see why he was so careful about everything. He didn't want to let that plane fall. Paid off for him. He never did get into serious trouble.

I thought he was politically very intelligent. He wanted to see Hitler and Stalin go at each other's throats instead of ours. He wanted to stay out of the war because he thought it would give Stalin too much of an advantage in the postwar world.

Reason: In the late '30s, early '40s, he was vilified in the press as pro-Nazi for his isolationism. How did that affect him personally? Did he become bitter?

Chamberlain: No. He actually didn't give a damn what people thought. He was perfectly willing to go his own way. I think it troubled his wife, Anne, a bit.

Reason: How about another fellow I know you were friends with and who had maybe a similar evolution to yours, John Dos Passos. He did lose a lot of friends, didn't he, when he moved from the left to the right?

Chamberlain: Oh yes, he did. He didn't want to, but he did. He was perfectly willing

to get along with Hemingway even though he disagreed with him, but Hemingway wasn't willing to get along with him.

Reason: This was a disagreement over the Spanish Civil War, wasn't it, which opened Dos Passos's eyes?

Chamberlain: I think he was seeing through things before that. That trip he made to Russia: they asked him as he was leaving, "Are you one of us?" and he said, "No, I can't explain it, but I can't be quite one of you."

Reason: And then in his later life—I don't know if you'd call him a conservative as much as an individualist—his books were much less widely reviewed. I suppose that troubled him. Or was he another guy who just didn't care what people thought?

Chamberlain: Well, he would leave the country before the reviews came out—he didn't read 'em. I thought that novel, the labor-movement one [*Midcentury*], was just as good as anything he ever did. But he didn't get credit for it.

Reason: Did you know Ayn Rand?

Chamberlain: Yeah.

Reason: Was she as difficult to get along with as people suggest?

Chamberlain: I met her through Frances Hazlitt and Isabel Paterson. At that time she was perfectly easy to get along with. She was writing *Atlas Shrugged*. Later she broke with Isabel Paterson for some reason. I reviewed *Atlas Shrugged* for the *Herald Tribune* book section. It was a perfectly laudatory review, but I put as the last sentence a snapper: She should have stuck to the story instead of trying to rewrite the Sermon on the Mount. She hated that. I saw her at a party, and she cut me absolutely dead.

Reason: You wrote the forward to F. A. Hayek's *Road to Serfdom* in '44. When they came to you and dropped this manuscript on your desk, did you have any idea that this was going to be one of the most influential political works of our time?

Chamberlain: No. I read it and thought that it was very convincing. I tried to get an editorial in *Life* magazine but did not succeed.

Reason: The free-market intellectuals and publicists in the late '40s—one of their first collective ventures was a fortnightly magazine called *The Freeman*, which you and Henry Hazlitt and Suzanne LaFollette edited. Did you have any idea at the time that 30 years later the viewpoint represented by this magazine would win the White House?

Chamberlain: Well, Frank Chodorov used to come into the office and tell us it would take 20 years for our point of view to prevail. We wanted to believe him, and it turned out he was right. It did take about 20 years. The Fabians didn't take over in England right away—they had to wait, too.

Reason: So when you launched this magazine it didn't seem at all quixotic? Did you have a plan?

Chamberlain: We thought it was needed to counteract *The Nation* and *The New Republic*. But the board of directors wouldn't raise any money for us, and we got into a bit of a Taft-Eisenhower squabble and split down the middle.

Reason: Were you on the Taft side or the Eisenhower side?

Chamberlain: The Taft side.

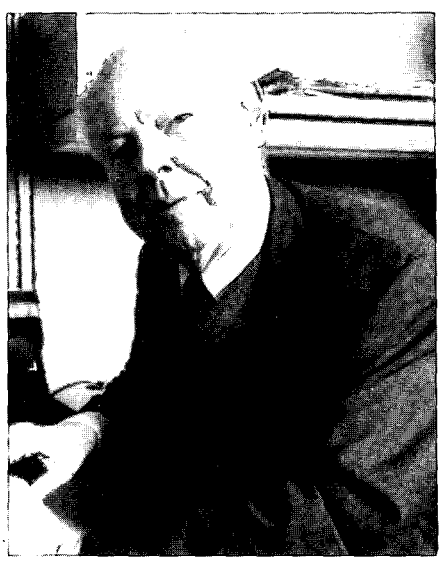
Reason: So you still at the time had a Taftite skepticism of foreign intervention?

Chamberlain: I thought Taft and Hoover had been right about staying out of the war and letting Stalin and Hitler fight it out.

Reason: At one time, Henry Hazlitt had disagreements with you and said he didn't want to be associated with "the kind of magazine in which Joe McCarthy is a sacred character." You had some sympathy for McCarthy, didn't you? Do you regret that?

Chamberlain: I never saw him as a villain. I just saw him as a person who didn't know how to read very well. I thought it was a great mistake to be put off by him. We asked Freda Utley to show us something she had done for Joe McCarthy. It was an analysis of Owen Lattimore's position. In one column it had Stalin saying something on such and such a date, and on the opposite column she had Lattimore saying the same thing. It was a deadly parallel sort of thing, but she didn't call Lattimore any names. She gave it to Joe McCarthy, who reduced it to "Owen Lattimore is the leader of the Communist conspiracy in America," which Freda had not said. I just think McCarthy could not read. But there were Communists in the State Department.

I never saw Joseph McCarthy as a villain. I just saw him as a person who didn't know how to read very well.



Reason: Yeah, well, they asked Frank Chodorov what to do about Communists in government jobs and he said, "Abolish the jobs," which maybe would have been a better way to do it. Now that the American role in the world is much different than it was before World War II, are we no longer the shining city on the hill but just another imperial bully pushing people around?

Chamberlain: No. You're getting at the root of my troubles. I'd like to be a complete libertarian, but as long as Russia exists in the world, I can't be. I think someone has to oppose the spread of the Communist empire. Is that an imperial desire, or is it common sense?

Reason: Well, I suppose it depends on how you would do it. For instance, supporting Pinochet in Chile, or the South Korean dictator Chun, maybe these things are counterproductive and inconsistent with our original values.

Chamberlain: Well, I don't like Pinochet particularly, either. But Chile would have been in worse trouble if Allende had transformed it into another Cuba.

Reason: Although is that any of our concern, what happens in Chile?

Chamberlain: It isn't just Chile. Our concern is Angola and Mozambique and Nicaragua and Cuba itself. I think if Chile had gone Communist there would have been a domino effect elsewhere.

Reason: Is that why you think we should intervene somehow in, say, Angola?

Chamberlain: I wouldn't put the American marines in Angola, no. But I don't see why we can't help Savimbi.

Reason: Well that costs money which comes from taxpayers who probably wouldn't otherwise...

Chamberlain: That's why I'm inconsistent! I'd like to do it in the cheapest possible way. Let Savimbi win in Angola and whoever win in Mozambique. That's the way the Russians play it.

Reason: In your autobiography, *A Life with the Printed Word*, you write of a very interesting conversation you had with Thomas Dewey, the Republican candidate for president in '44 and '48, about Pearl Harbor.

Chamberlain: I went to Washington for *Life*. Don Levine had a party to celebrate

my birthday and his wife's birthday. Someone, some colonel who was drinking very heavily, said the Republicans knew all about Pearl Harbor. He wouldn't talk for publication. I sent Luce a memo on it. Luce said, well, we can't do anything about it now, but file it away and when the war's over we'll do something. After V-J day, Luce got me on the phone in Washington and said, "Remember that memo you sent me about Republicans knowing all about Pearl Harbor? I'd like to have you go up and ask Tom Dewey about it." So I remember going up to Elmira [New York] and picking up Dewey—he was touring some state facility there—and he said, well, come along with me, I'm driving up to Geneva. So I sat in the back of the car and listened to his story about the broken Japanese code. He said he was going to make a campaign issue of it in 1944 but that Marshall had sent Colonel Carter Clarke to him, who said you can't do this because the Japanese haven't changed their code and you'd be giving something too valuable away to them. So Dewey never used it in the '44 campaign.

Reason: Did Dewey think that Roosevelt knew of the attack on Pearl Harbor beforehand?

Chamberlain: He didn't know that it would be at Pearl Harbor, but he knew that Roosevelt knew there was going to be an attack somewhere. Harry Hopkins in the White House said, well, if they're going to hit us why don't we hit them first? Roosevelt said no, we can't do that, we're a peaceful democracy.

Reason: Although it seems clear now in retrospect that they were glad for the opportunity afforded to enter World War II. This was our back door to war.

Chamberlain: Oh yeah. Stimson welcomed it I know.

Reason: What was your reaction? I mean, you were at the time very much "keep America out of war." What was your reaction on December 7, when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor? Then you were "get America into war"?

Chamberlain: You had to be. What else could you do?

Reason: You helped give young Bill Buckley his start by writing the introduction to *God and Man at Yale*, his first book. Did you have a sense that this young 25-year-old would someday be one of the towering figures of American conservatism?

Chamberlain: Well, I knew he'd be heard from, but I didn't visualize what happened. We knew, on *The Freeman*, that Buckley and Brent Bozell were comers.

Reason: You often speak of conservatives and libertarians as very close relatives. It seems that over the last couple of years anyway, conservatives, particularly the Reagan administration, have changed their focus from free-market economics toward foreign policy and also proscribing certain types of behavior—reading dirty books or smoking marijuana or something. Does it make any sense to speak of conservatives and libertarians in the same breath?

I don't think you can legislate morality, and the more you try, the more difficulties you encounter.

Chamberlain: Well, I'm not in favor of dirty books.

Reason: But do you want to...

Chamberlain: These are realms that I think ought to be left to people. I don't think you can legislate morality, and the more you try, the more difficulties you encounter. A lot of things I'm for, I think ought to be done voluntarily.

Reason: Would that be your position on, say, marijuana?

Chamberlain: It all depends on how much of a poison marijuana is.

Reason: Do we have the right to poison ourselves?

Chamberlain: I'm not for a jail sentence for smoking marijuana, no.

Reason: You call yourself a voluntarist, correct?

Chamberlain: I like the word *voluntarism* better than *privatization*. I don't know why.

Reason: Do you think if we repealed all the social-welfare legislation of the last few decades, private charity would suffice?

Chamberlain: I think the human race would find some way of dealing with those problems without running to Washingon. But it's so far from happening. I'm satisfied to get—in education for instance, I'm satisfied if you can have private schools alongside public schools. I don't expect public schools to be abolished any time soon.

Reason: I was struck by an article you wrote for *The New Republic* in 1939 that I read the other day.

Chamberlain: Oh no!

Reason: Not to bring back old writings against you or anything. You were assessing antiwar sentiment among young people. You wrote, "The boys and girls tend to distrust all slogans, all tags—even all words. They will not easily fall for any crusader unless his promises can be translated into jobs, security, prospects for the future, a chance to study and learn—and an extension of traditional American civil liberties. They will believe in the 'Fascist menace' if and when they see it striking at their freedom to argue and dissent among themselves." In reading this, it struck me that it could have been written with just a couple changes 30 years later to describe the antiwar sentiment among people in the Vietnam era. Were you sympathetic to the antiwar movement in the '60s?

Chamberlain: I didn't like the war. I thought it was a very stupid war. If you're going to get into a war, get in and win it quickly. The only thing I objected to was that the protest went to violent extremes itself. There wasn't much excuse for throwing a dean down the stairs just because he represented a university whose policies you might not approve of. Since I don't think you can draft people anyway, I think the kids had a right to object to being drafted.

Reason: So you have you always been antidraft?

Chamberlain: Yeah. I don't see how you can say a person's body belongs to the state.

Reason: Do you have any professional regrets—roads not taken, choices poorly made?

Chamberlain: I sometimes wish I would have had time to write more books. Daily journalism is too time-consuming for that.

Reason: Some people, in looking at your career, might say, "Poor Chamberlain, such a fine young critic, and then he got mixed up with that conservative crowd." How would you answer them?

Chamberlain: It wouldn't bother me particularly. I ceased to be a critic because I got interested in other things. So I would say I don't have any big regrets. ◻

CONSTITUTION

SERIES

1787-1987

A city upon a hill,
a human-divine paradise,
a light unto the nations—
the American Religion.

America as Utopia

by **Robert Nisbet**

America is unique among nations of Western society in its utopia-touched origins. When John Winthrop and his band of Puritans arrived in Massachusetts they brought with them a firm desire to create a society of Biblical purity. "We must always consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill—the eyes of all people are upon us." This injunction from St. Matthew (5:14) was taken by Winthrop and his fellow Pilgrims as the foundation of the new nation they intended to create. As Perry Miller has pointed out in his historic essay "Errand in the Wilderness," the first spiritual crisis of the New World took place when these hardy and devout Puritans discovered, first, that the eyes of all people were not on them and second, that as the years passed, they had fallen morally from the sacred hill.

The utopian passion continued, however, and much of the intellectual history of the 17th century reflects the passion and also preoccupation with the nature and conditions of utopian being—of wickedness to be overcome and virtue to be attained. Within a few decades an important change took place. When they arrived the Puritans had their minds on a Christian city. But soon the protagonist of the divine epic could be seen subtly changing from the Puritan-Christian to the American. As Ernest Tuveson has written in his illuminating *Redeemer Nation: The Idea of America's Redeemer Role*:

"When Protestant millennialist theory was formed, logically there came with it a need to find a new chosen nation, or nations. If history is theodicy, if redemption is historical as well as individual...there must be children of light and children of darkness geographically, and the City of God and the City of the World should be susceptible of being designated on maps."

From the time of the Great Awakening of the 1730s in America, with Jonathan Edwards one of the principal figures involved, Christianity and Americanism would interpenetrate, with the fervor and even the liturgy of the former often infused into treatments of the 13 colonies, not least in their increasingly hated role of being subject to the British Crown. America was by now the "city upon a hill" in the eyes of a constantly enlarging number of pre-Revolutionary Americans. It is doubtful that a single American

president, down to and including Ronald Reagan, has failed in one speech or another to invoke the Matthew image in support of America the Redeemer.

It was in this light of redemption that the American jeremiad was born. This distinctive form of literature came first into existence in Europe, an element of the Protestant Reformation. But it reached its greatest force and intensity in America, first through Puritan use, then more widely, American. Sacvan Bercovitch, in *The American Jeremiad*, has gone to the heart of this literary form:

"The American jeremiad was a ritual designed to join social criticism to spiritual renewal, public to private identity, the shifting 'signs of the times' to certain traditional metaphors, themes, and symbols. To argue (as I do) that the jeremiad has played a major role in fashioning the myth of America is to define it at once in literary and historical terms. Myth may clothe history as fiction, but it persuades in proportion to its capacity to help men act in history."

In the beginning the American jeremiad was little more than the sermon, but by the early 18th century its essence could be found in secular as well as religious contexts, in passionate support of America the Beautiful as well as Christ. Tirelessly the writers of jeremiads told the story of America, the "city upon a hill," the land of all the hopes and dreams which had been blunted and even destroyed in the Old World.

But with equal ardor the jeremiadists told what was wrong with America in its present hour, told of its secret recesses of wickedness, of evils which had somehow accumulated in the course of America's brief history. And finally, transcendingly, the jeremiad laid out a program of action and reform by which America could recover the innocence that had become lost or tarnished. In each of these thrusts, there lay the conviction that America had, through some combination of divine and historical reasons, become the conscience of the world, at once model and actor.

Those historians who have tried to demonstrate that the American Revolution was a strictly "controlled," "finite," and "contained" revolution, with little if any ecstasy about it, simply haven't read the exultations and the promises of most of the men who carried the Revolution through to success. For Tom Paine, Samuel Adams, and also John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, America of the Revolution was in truth "a city upon a hill" and, moreover, one with the "eyes of all people" upon it. They saw the flames of the American Revolution spreading to South America and Europe and Asia, to all places in due time where people suffered from ignorance, illiteracy, superstition, and tyranny.

In newspaper, sermon, oration, pamphlet, historical study, novel, and state decree, the American jeremiad flourished in the decades following the Revolution, flourished indeed throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. By virtue of the jeremiad, Sacvan Bercovitch writes, "American millennialism pervaded the entire spectrum of social thought. Educators planned for a 'spiritual revolution' that would bring humanity to perfection. Political and moral performers advertised their programs as the 'revolutionary consummation of God's plan.' Prominent thinkers urged that technology would 'revolutionize the land' into becoming a 'human-divine paradise'....Labor leaders found in the Revolution a 'post-millennial justification for trade unionism.' "

The idea of progress was of course a cardinal premise, or corollary, of American utopianism. This idea, with historic roots in both Greek rationalism and Christian millennialism, was almost perfectly forged for American use. That mankind had progressed in the past, was now progressing, and would continue to progress—spiritually, morally, and socially, as well as economically and politically—was no more doubted by Adams and Jefferson than by such Europeans as Condorcet and Godwin. And, thought the Founding Fathers, America was in the vanguard of this human epic of progress.

Americans warmed to any European visitor who flattered them, as Tocqueville did, at least in the first part of his *Democracy in America*, and tried to overlook the occasional tourist like Dickens who was somewhat less impressed. As H. L. Mencken has recorded in his *American Language*, the 19th century was an age of unrivaled profusion of homely but telling maxims and other colloquialisms bespeaking an America already astride the world. The philosopher-historian John W. Draper filled Cooper Union night after night with his solemn and lengthy disquisitions on the foundations of American progress in natural law, a progress that was "as completely under the control of natural law as is the bodily growth of an individual." The American utopia was, in sum, a part of the natural provisions of cosmic physics.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, so often doubtful about this or that element of Americana, was as confident as any other prophet of the essential correctness of the American course of history. "Who does not prefer the age of steel, of gold, of coal, petroleum, cotton, steam" to the falsely lauded ages of stone, bronze, and iron in the past? In 1893 Chicago's great Columbian Exhibition brought 27 million visitors to its 600 acres of technological marvels. If the first theme was world progress, a second theme of American progress and leadership in the world was easy to identify.

It is sometimes forgotten that Henry George's classic *Progress and Poverty*, justly famous for its brilliantly conceived single tax, on land, had its origins, by the author's own acknowledgement, not in musings upon poverty but upon progress. Everything, with but one exception, he believed, bespoke the fulfilled progress of mankind in his day. This one exception was the persistence of poverty. To repair poverty—and the single tax would effect this—was to add the final step to a then-complete stairway to perfection, to utopia. "Words fail the thought: It is the Golden Age of which poets have sung and the high-raised seers have told in metaphor....It is the culmination of Christianity—the City of God on earth....It is the reign of the Prince of Peace."

Of course, as is doubtless inevitable, minds equally devout in their faith in the American Religion could divide bitterly whether a given act by the nation was in accord or grievous disaccord with the image of American nobility. Thus the war with Spain led such Americans as William James, Josiah Royce, and William Graham Sumner to denounce, in full jeremiadic tones, American imperialism—"earth hunger," as Sumner caustically dismissed it. But there were many others, probably a majority, to hail American aggression upon Spain as a mighty blow for America the Utopia, America the Redeemer, ever concerned with the plight of peoples still unacquainted with American political perfection.

Rare the American who, while declaiming of America the Beautiful, doesn't have in the back of his mind a few proposed laws and a constitutional amendment.

The American Religion has been a two-edged sword in our history. It has manifestly provided much of the psychological and ethical motivations that have gone into the populating and reclaiming of a

Centennial Progress U.S.A. July 4, 1876
Montgomery C. Tiers
1875
Oil on canvas.

vast continent. The moral and social elements that all students of capitalism, starting with Max Weber, have found to be crucial in economic growth and all that it contains and implies are the very stuff of the American Creed. Individual self-reliance, individual achievement, material prosperity, an eye to the future as well as the present, a preference for the private to the public sector as the haven of those in need, and the values of the family, church, and local community—these are all canons, as it were, of the American Religion.

But the American Religion has fostered another kind of dedication: that of conveying moral righteousness to the world. We see this in so much of our foreign policy.

It was Woodrow Wilson who saturated American policy toward the world with piety and moralism that virtually took the world by storm. From childhood he knew the clutch of Calvinist moral fervor. By the time he reached college his native Calvinism had begun to evolve into an evangelical Americanism. Tirelessly he cited St. Matthew's injunction, and incessantly he was at work on the actual creation, three centuries later, of the blessed city. He worked first for a "Princeton in the Nation's Service," in the process alienating half his students, faculty, and trustees; those who somehow couldn't assimilate his fervent preaching in support of extirpating the eating clubs and siting the graduate school, with each mission declared vital to all humanity.

Having failed at Princeton, Wilson betook himself, after a short preparatory stint as governor of New Jersey, to the presidency. He didn't lack for loyalists and enthusiasts. Indeed, he doesn't to this day. Crowded and noisy halls quiet instantly at a politician's invocation of Saint Woodrow—who showed the Way to a nation and world that have even yet failed to grasp it. Wilson made neutrality a sacred part of the American Religion during the first two years of the Great War. No city upon a hill should besmirch itself in a brawl of imperialists—Britain and France being just as venal as Germany. But having been reelected in 1916 precisely because "he kept us out of war," he had yet another divine afflatus, this one being the moral duty of America to enter the war, join in victory, and then from such a lofty vantage point show the world of nations how to avoid war in the future and to plant properly the seeds of democracy.

This, Wilson believed, as had many a predecessor in American government—although none with such power as he possessed—was America's destiny. The details of his chosen mission were revealed in the famous Fourteen Points on which he had had scribes and scholars secretly at work even before reelection. To the undoubted consternation of war-exhausted leaders such as Clemenceau, Lloyd George, and Churchill, who had seen millions of Europe's young men slaughtered, mutilated, and crippled, Wilson made it clear that as the price of American entry into the war, America would govern the peace. The story of Wilson's struggles with his allies in Europe, with members of the Democratic as well as Republican party at home, indeed with lifelong friends and intimates, has been too often told to warrant treatment here. Suffice it to say that with Wilson the American Religion became cosmic.

Two decades later Franklin D. Roosevelt repeated the mission of his adored Saint Woodrow. He too went through the prescribed ritual of, first, neutrality in the name of American virtue, then prescription of the true issues of the war, in his Four Freedoms address, then the Atlantic Charter. Like the Fourteen Points, the Charter would endow war with the moral aim of liberating peoples, of repudiating aggression of nations once and for all, along with war of any kind, and making certain that governments throughout the world would be linked in a mighty United Nations under which they could enjoy for the first time in their histories the blessings of an American-style democracy.

Roosevelt's courtship of Stalin throughout the war, once America entered it, had

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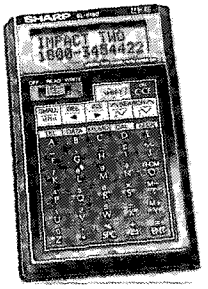

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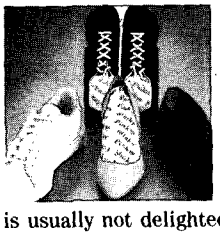
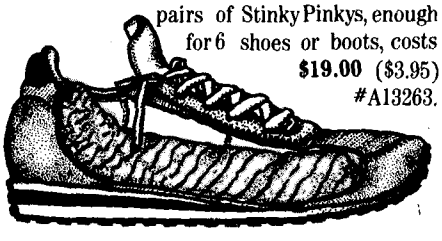
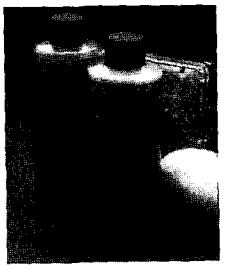


Fortunately, human anatomy is arranged so the nose and the feet are separated by the greatest possible distance. Even so, the twain do occasionally meet — and the nose is usually not delighted to know of the foot's exertions. Now just put a Stinky Pinky "sock" in each shoe and overnight odor is gone, absorbed by the special blend of all-natural earth materials. Works in running shoes, sneakers, boots, leather shoes, anything that goes on your feet. And keeps on working, too — just put Stinky Pinkys out in the sun for a day every three months or so to restore their odor-catching ability. Three pairs of Stinky Pinkys, enough for 6 shoes or boots, costs **$19.00** ($3.95) #A13263.



FOOD FOR WOOD



Most of the convenience waxes you buy actually dry out wood instead of nourishing it. What's the alternative? Our choice is Williamsville Wax. It is made of beeswax and lemon oil, heat-blended with other natural oils. It can be used on any type of wood, any type of finish, on paneling or kitchen cabinets as well as fine furniture. Williamsville Wax is super for restoring neglected or mistreated wood. Two 8-oz. bottles cost **$13.00** ($2.95) #A14312.

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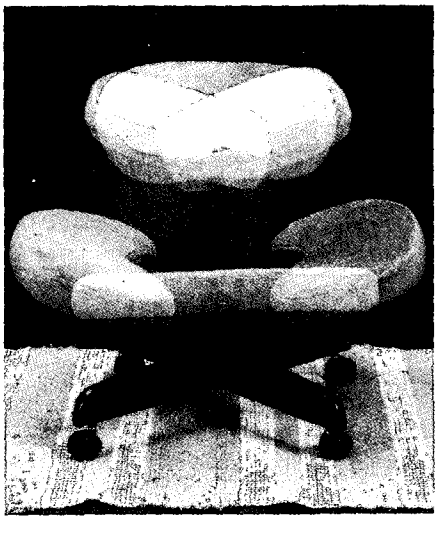

THE SHEEPSKIN SOLUTION FOR SHOULDER BELTS

Seat belts–a good idea for everyone and now a legal requirement for many. But that shoulder strap can have its aggravations. Anyone who has ever felt bruised after a short stop or found the strap irritating to skin when wearing bare summer clothes will appreciate the cushiony comfort of this new sheepskin cover that Velcro™-attaches to any strap. It stays put (the back is naturally slide-resistant) and need not be removed when belt retracts. Kids benefit, too–the belt often hits them at neck level–and furs and other good clothing are protected from marks and damaging friction. Made in the U.S.A. A pair is **$22.00** ($3.95) #A17062X.

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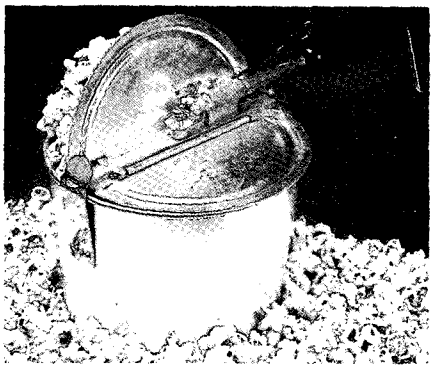

Most electric and hot-air poppers "puff" the corn more than they "pop" it, leaving it tough with hard centers. This flat-bottomed stove-top popper reaches 475° (electric poppers typically operate at 350°) and pops full in two minutes with 4 quarts of the best popcorn you ever tasted. Stirring paddle with through-the-handle crank virtually eliminates burnt or unpopped kernels. Wooden handle for safe grip, two dump lids. Pop without oil for delicious diet popcorn, 325 calories per giant bowl. Produce tender, fluffy, old fashioned movie theater popcorn, **$25.00** ($3.95) #A1503. For taste-tempting flavored popcorn, a selection of 3 gourmet flavors—raspberry, praline and caramel — enough for 6 more gallons of popcorn, costs **$10.00** ($1.95) #A15043.

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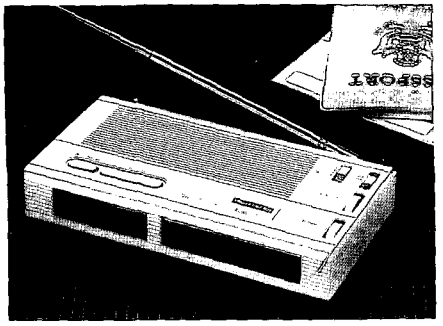

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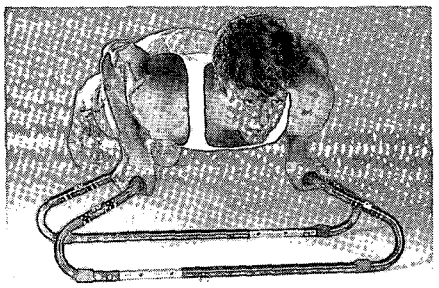

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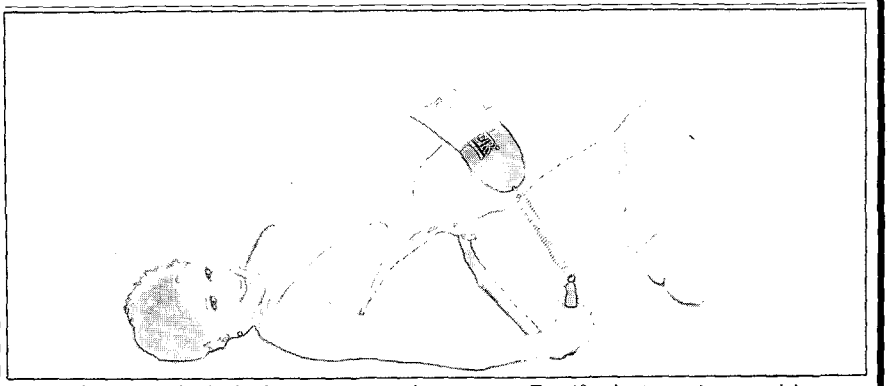

Keep it simple–that's the key to any exercise program. Try 10 minutes a day exercising your derriere with this easy-to-use device. Just lie across the stabilizer bar, hang on to the handles and lift against the resistance provided by a polyurethane strap and springs of steel (extra springs provided). You'll find you're also exercising arm, back and abdominal muscles. Works for both men and women and stores in places where those big machines can't. It's always at hand, there's no complicated routine to learn–so no excuses! **$22.00** ($3.95) #A1708X.

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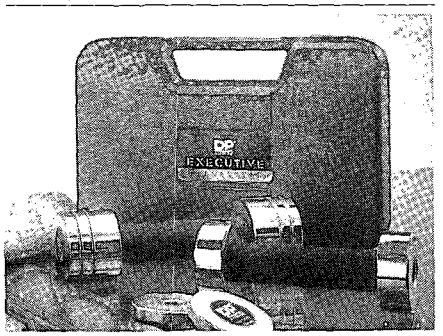

Carrying it to the office is no trouble. It comes in its own fitted brief case. Once you have it inside, all you need to do is find a few minutes during the day. Take off your coat, loosen your collar, and open the Executive Fitness Kit by D.P. Inside you'll find a matched set of short foam-incased metal barbells grips. Plus 4 chrome weight stacks that screw on the barbell posts. Each weight stack is made up of one 3 lb. disk and two 1 lb. disks, so you can vary the total weight between 6, 8, or 10 lbs. Attach your choice of weight and limber up with a few calisthentics while holding the weights. Then do a few sets of different arm lifts. It's not necessary to work up a sweat. Just get the blood circulating. Afterwards pack the weights away and go on with your day feeling rejuvenated, while your colleagues wonder where your second wind comes from. The D.P. Executive Fitness Kit costs only **$49.00** ($5.95) #A1538.

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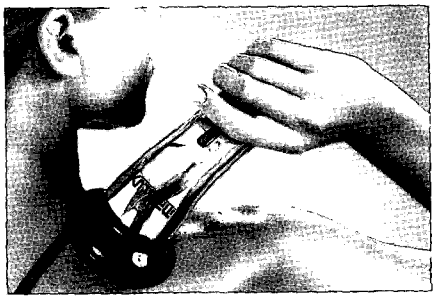

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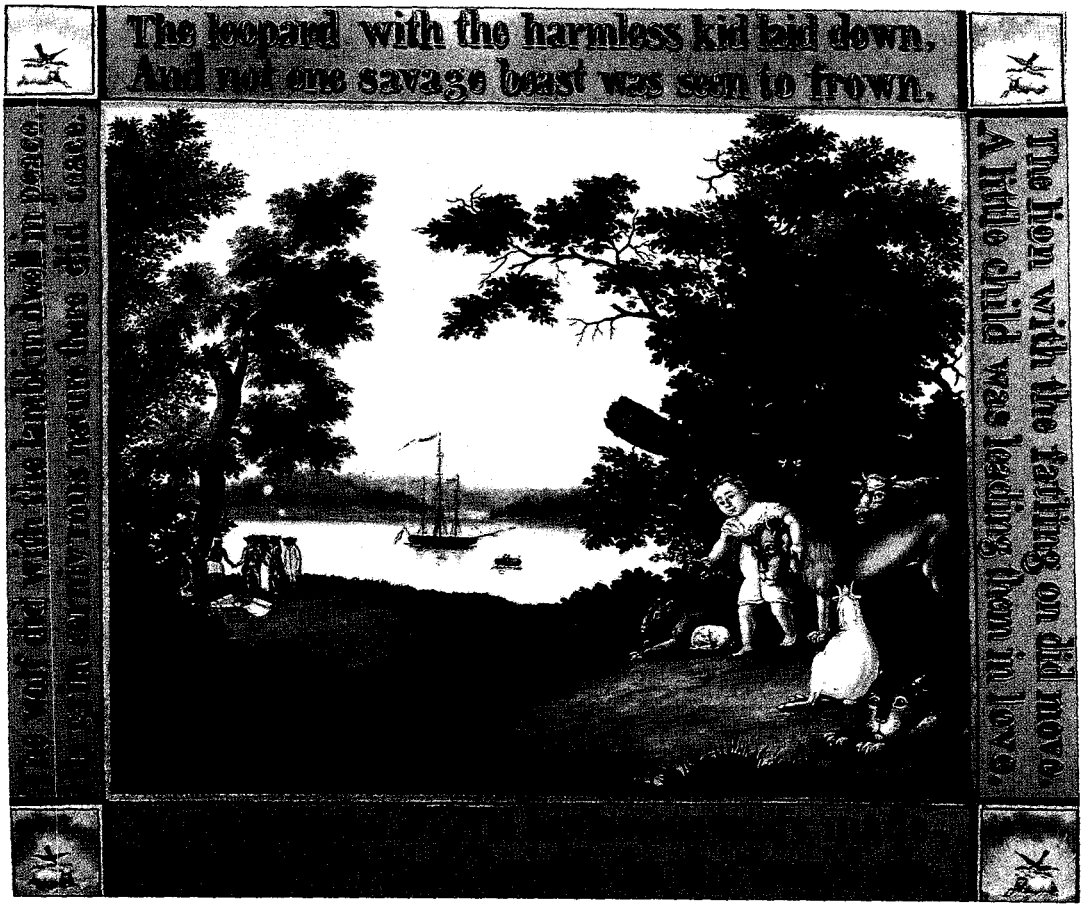
The leopard with the harmless kid laid down,
And not one savage beast was seen to frown.
The lion with the fatlings on did move,
A little child was leading them in love.

Peaceable Kingdom
Edward Hicks
c. 1835
Oil on canvas.

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the sole purpose of trying to win Stalin's full cooperation after the war in policing the world under the aegis of the Atlantic Charter and the United Nations. Roosevelt, again precisely like Wilson, spurned the governments of Britain, France, and indeed of all countries that had ever been engaged in imperialism; spurned them, that is, as potential leaders of world government.

In Roosevelt's view—a view helped a great deal by his man Harry Hopkins, ever vigilant to Soviet interest and welfare—Stalin was precisely the kind of world leader Roosevelt could work with after the war against Nazi Germany was won. After all, the Soviets had (yet) no record of imperialism, and despite such misfortunes as the liquidation of the peasantry, the purges, and the 1939 pact with Hitler, they were clearly on the way to becoming a nation like the United States. So FDR thought to the very end of his life, and by so thinking brought the Cold War upon America, just as Neville Chamberlain had effectively brought the second great European war of the century upon his country by exhibiting the same credulous faith in Hitler that Roosevelt soon would in Stalin.

There are a great many peculiarities of modern American history that are rooted squarely in the tradition of utopianism that the American Faith has nurtured for three centuries. Our relative imperviousness to socialism is one of them. The German historian of capitalism, Werner Sombart, was only one of a number of perceptive Europeans who, looking at American exceptionalism in this respect, decided that it was the widespread feeling among American workers that something equivalent to a socialist paradise had already been achieved that immunized them to the appeal of European socialist gospel. Every working man a capitalist, every capitalist a working man at heart: this was a part of the American Religion.

One need only scan the speeches of the pioneering industrialists—Carnegie, Rockefeller, Ford, and others—to discover quickly that they had all of the European socialist's contempt and fierce opposition to class inequalities and other hereditary obstacles to the freest possible rise of the common man. But they had something the European socialist didn't have: conviction that the good society could and would be achieved by individual freedom rather than collective action.

Consider American reaction to the tides of immigrants that began to roll over the American continent after the Civil War, most of them from eastern Europe and Asia. Two responses, both originating in the American Religion, were to be seen on the part of those who were or considered themselves native Americans.

The first was one of eschewal and segregation. The American city upon a hill was threatened with contamination by those of alien extraction. Fear of racial and ethnic contamination was real in America at the turn of the century. Eugenics societies sprang up, their aim that of achieving a public policy of some kind that would prevent intermarriage of different and unequal racial types. Not until the 1930s did the eugenics craze really subside in this country.

But side by side with repugnance for the alien intruder into paradise was to be found an opposite reaction, one also part and parcel of the American Religion: that of belief in the melting pot, of sincere conviction that the American house is one of many mansions. We take nothing away from the

hardihood and native ambition of the millions of immigrants who made their way to this country—who still do, legally and illegally—when we observe the works of Americans, and also of newly arrived but settled immigrants, in easing the transition from rootlessness to citizenship in America.

Only a patriotism that was religious at its core could have awakened the loyalties so quickly of the ranks of Russians, Poles, Latvians, and many others from eastern Europe. We need only go back to the letters they wrote to their European kinsmen and neighbors, to letters they wrote to the various newspapers of their own languages that sprang up quickly, to the ease with which they moved into politics, and, at higher levels of success and literary zeal, to the books by the Carnegies and Boks that attracted the attention of native as well as foreign-born Americans. In all of these, America is plainly more than a nation; it is a religion.

Even more remarkable is the awakening of American consciousness among blacks, so many of whom had themselves lived in slavery. Deeply Christian from the beginning, the transition to American-Christian in faith and loyalty was widespread. No one reading Booker T. Washington today can doubt the authenticity of his celebration of American freedom and opportunity.

Even the Great Depression didn't appreciably dampen enthusiasm for the American Faith. Studies at the time and later revealed the persistence of American faith in progress, in the basic fairness of life, in the superiority of American acumen to that of foreign nations, and in the value of individual effort. I do not have to be reminded of the plethora of reconstructive and outrightly utopian ideas in that decade, ranging from Social Credit to Upton Sinclair's End Poverty in California and Dr. Townsend's Thirty Dollars Every Thursday. But to a remarkable degree all of these (I am of course specifically excluding Marxist organizations and missions) were clearly within the American idiom—as much so as reform movements to end bossism in politics; to establish the initiative, referendum, and recall; and to supplement private enterprise with something like the national park system.

It must not be forgotten that correction and improvement of the city upon a hill—which everyone recognized had a tendency to fall occasionally in the embraces of Sodom and Gomorrah—were as vital in the American Religion as was constitutive faith in the overriding holiness of the city. Hence the undimmed popularity of the jeremiad through the life of the Republic. It has today, as it had in Cotton Mather's time, the twofold function of celebrating the American Way and also castigating it for its continuing imperfections. Rare the American who, while declaiming of America the Beautiful, doesn't have in the back of his mind a few proposed laws and a constitutional amendment or two.

It is the religious element in our patriotism that no doubt accounts for the high intensity and shrillness of our reactions to political maldoers. As we know, Europeans, generally more sophisticated than Americans in political affairs, could only look on in mingled astonishment and laughter at our Watergate. That event was a very awakening for journalists, who hadn't found opportunity for such battles with Satan since World War I and its rape-obsessed, child-mutilating, slavering Huns in German uniform.

What of the future? Will the American Religion, with its amalgam of diverse impulses and incentives, prosper in the decades ahead? There are reasons for doubting that it will.

There is first the changing attitude toward the past—or rather to those elements of the present that are our signposts to the past. What T. S. Eliot called "disowning the past" is today a national mission, or so it would seem, living as we do in the snow-candy clouds of futurism that fill the sky so seductively. A distinguished historian, J. H. Plumb, has actually called for "the death of the past," seeing in it little besides superstition and tyranny. But like it or not, the past is precious; indeed, as Orwell demonstrated in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, indispensable so far as the preservation of freedom is concerned.

There is also the waning faith in economic growth, not only in America but in the West as a whole. Pursuits such as environmentalism, women's liberation, civil rights of every description, and health-mania have crowded out many of the interests that once had nowhere else to go but to the economic gospel of work and efficiency. There is nothing so calculated to destroy political freedom in the long run as is the current sneering attitude among intellectuals toward the necessary engines of economic progress —factories, machines, overalls, et al.

Add to these the all too evident decline in the sense of and respect for *knowledge*—as compared with mere information of the sort the newsweeklies dispense automatically, and with the diversion to which most of television consecrates itself, and the vast array of spectator and consumer activities that fill time but not mind and character. Merely glance at some randomly selected college catalogs of courses: under the rubric of history we are more than likely to find a half-dozen courses on feminine mystique, black literature, the unemployed, the indigent, and alienation in America for every straightforward course on the American nation as a whole. The view is hardly better when we turn to philosophy. Gone are the classic courses in ethics, aesthetics, metaphysics, and the philosophy of history; in their places are consecratedly deconstructionist exercises in linguistic analysis and hermeneutics.

Nor can we overlook the wave of subjectivism that began to roll over the American mind shortly after World War II. It is manifest at all social levels in American society and is identifiable as narcissism, egocentricity, the transmeditational, and an almost infinite variety of philosophies and strategies of psychotherapy. The hallmark of the subjective is the sovereign place accorded individual consciousness and correlatively the diminished—if not exorcised —status of the outer world.

There is finally the immense role today played by the evangelicals and fundamentalists. There have been awakenings of Christianity throughout American history; as we have seen, the creed of Americanism is inseparable in origin from these spasmodic religious bursts. But until the present time, these have been largely self-contained; they have not made the state their cherished prize. That forbearance is seemingly gone at the present time, as the highly political presences of Pat Robertson, Oral Roberts, Jimmy Swaggart, and Jerry Falwell suggest. In their televised glory, these evangelists brazenly infuse the religious with the political and make of politics a medieval-style crusade against the infidel, who is of course everywhere, from the kindergarten to the halls of Congress.

Only with the greatest difficulty could any of the Founders breathe in today's America, given its mists of boredom, self-preoccupation, the epicene, the supernatural, and epidemic moralism. The Soviet Union is not as immediate a threat to American liberty as are these world-denying seizures of the public mind. We shall do well if we enter the third millennium with the pillars of reason, individualism, and representative democracy still intact, and thus perhaps do again what the Framers did so magnificently 200 years ago. ◻

Robert Nisbet's most recent book is Conservatism: Dream and Reality.

How a 19th-Century reformer brought the three Rs to the poor.

Schooling for Shillings

by **John Chodes**

Imagine a private-enterprise educational system that spans the globe and teaches tens of thousands of the disenfranchised poor the three Rs. For the students, the schools are virtually free, yet they are self-sustaining. The system encourages children to develop personal initiative, adult responsibility, and an appreciation of the laws of economics. Students work at adult jobs within the school and get paid for them. They learn to read and write in months instead of years.

This is not a utopian free-enterprise pipe dream. This was the Lancaster system—in its heyday in the early 1800s, an exciting, controversial, and revolutionary educational approach. It caused considerable social upheaval by enabling the poor to break down traditional socioeconomic barriers with their newfound skills.

Ironically, its success ultimately provoked a rapid growth in public education, even though government never duplicated the Lancaster system's low cost or efficiency. The Lancaster system's rise and fall presents a stark lesson for all who are interested in alternatives to today's government education system.

As a young Quaker, Joseph Lancaster felt early in life the sting of religious discrimination. Born in 1778 in the slums of London, his family's faith barred him from attending the schools for the poor run by the Church of England. So his father taught him at home.

The painful memory of this official discrimination, coupled with a temperament suited to pedagogy—biographer David Salmon lists his qualities as "zeal, self-confidence, ingenuity,...intuitive insight into the nature of children, [and an] ardent love for them"—motivated Lancaster to teach the poor. By age 18 he was instructing London urchins in his father's attic, many for free or for a nominal charge. (Lancaster was successful in raising funds to maintain his school, Salmon notes, because he was "a skillful, persistent, and unblushing beggar, and he had joined a sect always famous for its liberal and unostentatious charities.")

The young schoolmaster was soon deluged with hundreds of students. With so many pupils and limited funding, Lancaster had to devise a radical method to make ends meet: thus was the "monitorial system" born. The system delegated to the students responsibility for teaching and doing the paperwork. The better students taught the slower. When the slower developed, they became monitors. There was one teaching monitor for every 10 students. But there were other monitorial positions that involved many of the students and spread prestige and responsibilities around.

One monitor would assign a new student to a class. Another would keep track of absences. When a student made progress, a monitor promoted him. Another made or mended pens. Another was in charge of writing slates. A "monitor-general" was in charge of all the other monitors.

The nature of the student interaction—teaching and learning from their peers—discouraged boredom or what later came to be called alienation. Wrote Lancaster: "A school, governed by such order, exhibits a scene of delight to visitors, and happiness among the children, which baffles the power of description."

Under this system, there was little for the master (teacher) to do except organize,

ILLUSTRATIONS-PERRY PEREZ

reward, punish, and inspire. Lancaster's schools didn't need a harsh master, for they were governed almost automatically. "The master should be a silent bystander because the system and not the master's vague or uncertain judgment will be in practice," he boasted. "In a common school, the authority of the master is personal and the rod is his scepter. His absence brings riot and confusion. In his absence his assistants will rarely be minded. Under my plan, the master leaves and business goes on as usual because the authority is not personal."

His method was unique, fast, and effective. "I continually made experiments," Lancaster later recalled. "1,000 children could be taught in one school room under the care of one master and a great proportion of them finish their education in 12 months. That education comprising the art of reading, writing and arithmetic." Beyond the three Rs, his schools also emphasized geometry, algebra, trigonometry, religion, and languages.

In seeking ways to motivate his students, Lancaster stumbled on a method that brought out their entrepreneurial spirit and taught them how to deal with money. This was no small matter, since Lancaster's era was coincident with the early stages of the Industrial Revolution. Most of the students and their parents had rarely dealt directly with cash.

The schools awarded merit badges for various deeds and accomplishments. These were small paper tickets, much like trading stamps in 1960s America. And like trading stamps, the merit badges were worth little individually but had considerable value when redeemed in bulk. Toys, children's books, French half-crown pieces engraved with "a reward for merit," silver pens, medals, and purses were typical of the prizes that merit badges could buy.

Badges were also used to borrow books from the library monitor, whose job was much like a "concession." It was a bonanza for the monitor, and students often bid to purchase the concession with their merit badges. They learned, in the process, something about the dynamics of buying and selling in the marketplace.

In fact, free-market themes dominated Lancaster's ideas. Adult teachers in Lancaster's system had their income partially based on class attendance. Thus a teacher became a salesman and a promoter of the system to bring in more pupils. Anyone who could pay the few shillings a year was welcome, including girls—no other system at the time had accepted them on an equal basis with boys. In the Lancaster system; they were taught the same subject matter as boys.

Lancaster's cost-cutting experiments

brought the cost of education down to a fraction of competing church or private schools. For example, students wrote on slate instead of paper. Paper was expensive, slate indestructible. To save money on books, the schools used one per subject per class. Each page was separated, placed on a stand, then the class was broken up into 10 student units. Each unit gathered around a stand and studied that one page as a lesson. The groups would then rotate so that each one would have access to all the lessons.

This was truly mass-produced education. Soon it was possible to be self-sustaining by charging as little as four shillings a year.

Joseph Lancaster was a zealot, which was a source of both strength and weakness. He believed his system would revolutionize society by eradicating illiteracy and therefore ending poverty. To propagate the faith, he wrote a short manual, *The Lancasterian System of Education*, and printed several thousand copies. He lectured all over the world, giving away copies of his manual to anyone who professed conversion to his ideas.

Biographer Salmon describes Lancaster's travels and successes: "During 1808-1810 he made 16 missionary journeys, traveled 6,837 miles, delivered 141 lectures, and was instrumental in establishing 95 schools for 25,000 children." All that in an era of slow carriages and boats.

Lancaster was a great salesman, but he was terrible at business. Although he earned huge lecture fees, he gave much of it away to sincere or not-so-sincere audience members who said they needed seed money to implement his plan. He also liked to live well. Robert Dale Owen, the Scottish-born American social reformer, wrote that Lancaster was "a strange mixture of honest self-sacrificing zeal and imprudent self-indulgent ostentation."

His major break toward national fame came when the aristocrat Lord Somerville attended a class and quickly became a backer in 1803. Somerville told others what he had seen, and soon, according to Lancaster's biographer and friend William Corston, "foreign princes, ambassadors, peers, commoners, ladies of distinction, bishops and archbishops, Jews and Turks, all visited the schools with wonder-waiting eyes."

This ferment reached King George III, who granted an audience to Lancaster. "I have sent for you to give me an account of your system of education....One master teach 500 children at the same time? How do you keep them in order, Lancaster?" asked the king. Lancaster described the monitorial system. The king was satisfied. "I highly approve of your system, and it is my wish that every poor child in my dominions should be taught to read the Bible; I will do everything you wish to promote this object." The King promised 100 pounds annually, from his own funds, not the state's.

This modest patronage transformed a growing private business into a national insitution. But in the end it proved fatal, as it aroused conservatives—including defenders of the Church of England—to active opposition. To his critics, Lancaster was a dangerous radical intent on creating a social revolution. Teaching the "unwashed masses" reading and writing and the virtue of self-reliance, he was making it possible for them to crack the traditional class barriers.

His most vociferous critic was Sarah Trimmer. She warned that Lancaster's emphasis on merit, not class, might lead to the day when "boys, accustomed to consider themselves nobles of a school, may, in their future lives, from a conceit of their own trivial merits...aspire to be nobles of the land, and to take the place of the hereditary nobility."

Mrs. Trimmer also attacked Lancaster for his nonsectarian approach to education. "My schools were not established to promote the religious principles of any particular sect," attested Lancaster, "but, setting aside all party distictions, its object is to instruct our youth in useful learning [and] in the leading and uncontroverted principles of Christianity." Lancaster's liberalism enraged Tory clergymen. "If this be liberality," thundered the Archdeacon of Sarum, "it is liberality at the expense of Christianity."

Lancaster's opponents soon turned to championing a rival educational method, the "Madras" system of an obscure Scottish clergyman, Dr. Andrew Bell. The system, though it relied on monitors, taught neither self-reliance nor familiarity with the workings of the free-enterprise system. It

reinforced all the negatives of the class barriers. "In utopian schemes for the universal diffusion of general knowledge," preached Dr. Bell, "there is a risk of elevating those who are doomed to the drudgery of daily labor above their situation, and rendering them unhappy and discontented in their lot."

Lancaster at first praised Bell's experiments with the Madras system, but as it became apparent that conservative leaders of the Church of England were trying to use Madras to eliminate the Lancaster system, he turned bitter, denouncing Madras as a tool of those opposed to the advancement of the poor. "The ignorance of the poor," he wrote, "who constitute a very numerous class in Britain, was felt necessary to keep the enormities and oppressions of the establishment in darkness."

The church, in promoting Madras, used the same tactics that many modern retail or fast-food chains use against one another. Wherever Lancaster opened a school, the church opened one of its own directly across the street. Backed by huge school construction funds from Parliament, the tactic was a success. Gradually, the church split Lancaster's market and, step by step, bled him to death.

But as much as the Tories and the church were responsible for bringing Lancaster down, his own profligate ways hurt perhaps even more. Early on, a number of nationally prominent men came together to form a board of directors ("The Committee of Managers") to promote the system along realistic business lines. They fused the best of utopian faith in Lancaster's system with years of financial expertise.

The committee's first task was to separate Lancaster's personal and business monies, but this infuriated the mercurial innovator. He believed that all incoming money, whether from his lectures or books or from school tuition or contributions, was for his discretionary use, including indulgence in the high lifestyle to which he had grown accustomed. The committee would brook no more of his erratic behavior.

Writes biographer Salmon of the members: "They freely sacrificed their time and money for the sake of the man, but, even for his sake, they would not sacrifice the system. They saved it from the bigotry and blindness of its opponents, and...they would save it from the folly and caprice of its inventor."

The committee, exasperated by Lancaster's chronic indebtedness, finally discharged him from his responsibilities. A paranoid Lancaster counterattacked by writing a deluded pamphlet, "Oppression and Persecution," that destroyed his esteem and led most of his remaining supporters to abandon him. Quietly, the committee raised money to send Lancaster to America.

Lancaster arrived in New York in 1818. But his system had preceded him by 12 years. By the time he stepped ashore, there were more of his monitorial schools in the United States than in England.

Lancaster was greeted like royalty. The mayor and governor officially received him. He visited the U.S. House of Representatives, which honored him with a resolution calling him a "friend of learning and of man."

Yet for aficionados of the free market, the story of the Lancaster system in the United States is more depressing than the rise and fall that took place in England. Particularly in New York State, government involvement via subsidy sullied the system almost from the beginning.

In 1805, the prominent philanthropists Thomas Eddy and John Murray formed "The Society for Establishing a Free School in the City of New York," whose purpose was to educate poor children who were ineligible for instruction by the various church-sponsored schools. Benjamin Perkins, the group's secretary, knew Lancaster and had seen his operation in England and recommended it. Within a year, the Free School Society (FSS) was incorporated, and the first classes were being held in Manhattan.

One of the Lancaster system's most powerful American friends was a man who would later serve as New York State's governor, DeWitt Clinton. Clinton was an early member of the Free School Society, and upon his request the New York State legislature granted the Free School Society a $4,000 subsidy to construct a building and $1,000 towared paying the school's expenses. The money came from a tiny liquor and tavern tax, so that the general public was not yet affected.

By 1818, three schools, teaching thousands of New York City's poor, were in operation. DeWitt Clinton was now governor. State-funded construction of five more schools was planned, which called for a wider tax—a real-estate tax was imposed.

New York State rapidly moved from subsidizing the FSS to managing it. By 1825, the Free School Society had changed its name to the New York Public School Society (PSS) and was admitting children of all economic levels. One year later, the PSS advocated a new city-wide education tax, labeling any who would oppose it "avowed advocates of popular ignorance."

Then, the coup de grace. The PSS, a closed corporation subsidized by the state, came under fire. John Spencer, state secretary, disclosed that "the Public School Society receive[s] nearly the whole amount of the fund belonging to the city." Moreover, he pointed out, the society had "acquired the entire control of the system of public education; [and] the taxpayers, who contribute to the fund, have no voice in the selection of those who administer the system."

Spencer quickly extended the state's authority by creating a Board of Commissioners (it soon became the now-familiar Board of Education) to "oversee" the PSS. Oversight meant control. Slowly, the PSS was strangled to death and finally, in 1852, the Board of Education absorbed it. Soon the cost of schooling quadrupled. Joseph Lancaster's system was dead.

The man himself had died years earlier. Lancaster settled in the Quaker redoubt of Philadelphia upon his arrival in the United States. But rumors of his profligate lifestyle and mammoth debts followed him from England. So he wandered, through South America, Canada, Baltimore, New Haven, everywhere. He was broke, staying with friends and admirers, always believing he had been persecuted.

In October 1838, while in New York to give a lecture, Joseph Lancaster was run over by a horse-drawn beer wagon, just a block away from one of his schools. He was 59 years old. Biographer Salmon writes, "His death was untimely in a double sense; it need not have come at 60, and for his reputation's sake it should have come at 30."

But let's allow Lancaster the last word on his radical and forgotten system. "Politicians," he wrote in his middle age, "have purposely interfered in what was originally a work of pure benevolence; and though they could neither corrupt or command the fountain, they have contaminated the stream." r

John Chodes is the communications director of the New York City Libertarian Party.

By Mark Skousen

Soldiers of Fortune

"The most dangerous game of modern society is the hunt for money," says investment advisor Julian Snyder. Money being a limited commodity, the search for superior profits is fiercely competitive. You have to develop a warrior mentality.

Several investment advisors have recently compared the financial world to the battlefield. Howard Ruff refers to his headquarters as the "financial war room," and his Jefferson Institute operates a popular week-long "investors' bootcamp."

Conservative publisher Bill Kennedy advertises an intensive course at his own "monetary war college." The brochure states: "War is an appropriate metaphor because it connotes the contentious, fiercely competitive nature of the free market....All investing...is a skirmish pitting the investment 'smarts' of one individual against another."

Comparisons can be misleading, however. In a real war, buildings are demolished and people's lives are destroyed. And getting killed in the financial market does not mean physical extinction.

Various critics of capitalism are fond of the notion that the marketplace is a chaotic jungle, characterized by cutthroat competition, the survival of the fittest, and imperialistic aggression among warring corporations. A popular book, *Marketing Warfare*, by Al Reis and Jack Trout (McGraw-Hill, 1986) expresses this viewpoint: "Free enterprise is marketing warfare....The true nature of marketing today involves the conflicts between corporations, not the satisfaction of human needs and wants." According to them, in the dog-eat-dog, "zero sum" world of Wall Street and Fifth Avenue, for every "winner" there is a "loser."

I reject this unrealistic and distorted view of free enterprise. The marketplace is not a jungle, in the sense that individuals and companies are constantly destroying each other. In fact, cooperation and voluntary exchange is far more common among businesses and customers. While it is true that competing enterprises come and go, there is always room for several competitors seeking to meet customers' demands. The fittest may make the most profits, but they are not the only ones to survive.

Moreover, the market does not pit "winners" against "losers." Anyone who has taken an elementary course in economics knows that in any voluntary exchange, both buyer and seller gain unless fraud or misrepresentation is involved.

The same is true in the financial world. Someone may buy a stock at $20 and sell at $30. Does that mean the buyer who paid $30 is a loser? Not at all. The stock may continue to rise to $40 or $50.

The commodity futures market often comes in for special criticism as a zero-sum game. Traders who "buy long" make a profit if the commodity's price rises, while the trader on the other side of the contract who "sells short" ends up losing. But such a view is naive and wrong-headed. The short trader may in fact be a hedger rather than a speculator, not looking for a profit but buying protection.

He may be a farmer, for example, wanting to guarantee a price for his wheat. If the price of wheat drops, his short contract will protect him; if the price goes up, his wheat crop will offset his investment loss. Either way, the farmer is assured of a set price. Recent economic studies show that the commodity futures market plays a vital role in the economy by reducing uncertainty and price volatility.

This is not to say that the financial markets are harmless. In fact, as the old Wall Street adage states in warfare terms, "the market takes no prisoners." The investor faces numerous menacing enemies, including high-pressure salesmen, fraud-peddlers, stock manipulators, market insiders, fear and greed, or just being on the wrong side of a market move.

Here are a few recommendations to prepare for the investment battlefields:

- *Don't be a passive investor.* You can't be a passive soldier and expect to beat the enemy. As in your full-time occupation, you need to devote time and research to your investments. Be an active investor, alert to new opportunities and changing trends.
- *Adopt a defensive strategy.* General MacArthur said, "All wars are the result of undefended wealth." And believe me, slick salesmen and brokers will wage war on your wealth unless you actively defend it. The best defensive strategy is to manage your own affairs as much as possible. You'll make mistakes, but you'll learn from them.
- *Don't get involved in high-risk speculations if you are a conservative investor.* Before you invest, decide whether you have the stomach for risky situations. Being a big risk-taker is not the only way to climb the road to riches. I know many examples of conservative "tortoises" outperforming speculative "hares."
- *Be disciplined soldiers of fortune.* "Discipline is the key to all success in peace and war," said General Patton. In investing, discipline means to be frugal in your spending habits and to build your capital base as quickly as possible through a regular savings program.
- *Get good support when investing.* An army can't survive without air support and intelligence briefings. The smart investor will arm himself with practical, experienced advisors and trustworthy, fair brokers. Newsletters and seminars should provide independent, unbiased recommendations, not investments the advisor or speaker is promoting for his own personal gain.

I highly recommend two investment books related to this topic: *The Battle for Investment Survival,* by Gerald M. Loeb (Simon & Schuster, $8.95), a classic on how to maximize profits and minimize risks; and *The Way of the Hunter Warrior,* by Julian M. Snyder (Richardson Books, $12.95), a fascinating book that compares the investment world to big-game hunting.

Mark Skousen is editor of Forecasts & Strategies, *author of 10 books, and adjunct professor of economics at Rollins College.*

MICHAEL KNEPP

$200 everytime I answer my phone.

Could you use $200 an hour for just answering your phone? It can be yours for just picking up the receiver and having a 4 minute conversation. I absolutely guarantee that you will receive phone calls from people asking you where to send their money. Sit by the phone and wait for calls to come in. All you have to do is sit by the phone. This is the most revolutionary money-making system that you have ever seen or heard of before. It has never been advertised before. Let me explain it to you.

It is a business that allows you to take a 20% commission off work you never perform. The people that perform the work are more than willing to give you 20% because you will be offering them more jobs than they will ever have time to do. Overnight you can employ about 100 people. You get paid $200 for every hour your crew works. All you do for this money is tell the crew when to start work—and then make sure the job was completed. It is as simple as that.

Not a cent comes out of your pocket to get this business going. It is a service that is deperately needed. Needed so badly that you will be getting paid large fees for the use of your service. With my book you can set up this business overnight. You don't need any experience or education. I didn't even complete grade 11 and I'm doing it. At one time I was even considered illiterate. All you need is the desire to make a lot of money without doing that much work.

Thousands of dollars are at your command. **People will be giving you 20% of their earnings—while you could be watching T.V.** Others that do your work are earning a modest living while you are becoming extremely rich. That is what this plan can do for you. It's amazing—revolutionary—a plan that will completely astound you. It is the only plan that you will ever find that will allow you to make thousands of dollars for doing practically nothing. Let me tell you how I stumbled upon this great discovery.

After leaving the Navy, money was hard to come by because I had very little education. I had a wife and six children to support. I struggled because I wanted my family to have the best. My children had to wear second-hand clothes and had to share their few toys with each other. I was a taxi cab driver at night and a handyman during the day. I worked day and night just to make ends meet. I'd come home in the twilight hours of the night only to have to get up at dawn for another day of work. My wife was so supportive she took care of the house and kids while I slaved away at my many jobs to put bread on the table. I loved my family so I took more jobs just so they could have a better future.

One day as I worked fiercely through the long hours of the day I felt some excruciating chest pain. As beads of sweat rolled down my face I tried to ignore the sharp pain. I fell to the bare concrete floor and was later rushed to the hospital. My heart had almost stopped. I was hours away from death. The future I tried to create for my loved ones was killing me. My family came to see me and the tears filled their eyes—my wife and children didn't want to see me die. I felt guilt and remorse inside. I cried to myself "I'm an honest guy and I work hard—why am I so poor. I wish I could find a way of making money that didn't require a lot of work." Just then it came to me. It was an idea so strong that I suddenly fell back in my bed in amazement. I knew at that moment that I had found the answer to my prayers. "Never again will I have to work hard," I thought to myself.

I put this new plan immediately into effect. While I was resting at home, money would come to me. **All I had to do was to answer the phone and have my 4 minute conversations.** I have never made so much money for doing practically nothing.

Mice and cockroaches lived in our house. The house was so run down that as soon as we moved out it was torn down. I moved my family out of the downtown ghetto we lived in. I made so much money so quickly that my neighbors thought I had won the million-dollar lottery. They just couldn't believe that I was making money while laying around the house. I swore that I would make a better future for my family. I bought my wife a brand new Cadillac for her birthday, a token for her loving support. Just last week I bought her a full length mink, because she was visiting cold Toronto.

I was making so much money that my accountant advised me to shelter it with real estate. I took his advice. Today I own a 3,300 sq. ft., $350,000 mansion with a pool and the works. It has an excellent view, in fact, you can see the ocean glittering from it. I own two shopping plazas, one is worth about $2.1 million and the other is worth about $700,000. I also own apartment buildings all over town worth about $400,000. With a grade 10 education I have become a millionaire. **Something you can do with very little effort just by answering your phone.**

This plan is so easy to put into operation. All you need is a phone and you are in business. Pick up the receiver, have the 4 minute conversation, and make big money. This business has nothing to do with selling or multi-level marketing. You are just supplying a badly needed service.

For every $1,000 you make, your client will save $5,000. How can they afford not to do business with you. They save $4,000 just for calling you. That is the only reason your phone will ring off the hook. I not only guarantee you will get phone calls but I am sure you will not be able to handle all of the calls when you first start out. **Each phone call you take will put hundreds of dollars in your pocket.**

"I'm standing in front of one of the plazas I own."

Send for my book *The $200 Phone Calls*, as each call comes in follow my instructions on how to carry on the conversation. If you are not making at least a few thousand dollars a day send back my book and your payment will be returned to you.

Wouldn't it be nice to be getting paid for doing practically nothing. Could you appreciate getting paid while watching T.V.? It's not working harder that will get you rich it is working smarter. I have a smart working method for you. A method that will get you any luxury car you want, a huge mansion overlooking the ocean, furs and jewelry beyond your wildest imagination. **It can all be yours for just picking up your phone and having a 4 minute conversation.**

Mike Gilford
6602B El Cajon Blvd., Dept. 408C
San Diego, CA 92115

Dear Mike,

Send me your book *The $200 Phone Calls*. On the condition that I should be making at least a few thousand dollars a day. All I have to do is follow your instructions for the 4 minute conversation. If I am unsatisfied with your book in any way send my payment back to me.

Here is my $10.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ St. _____ Zip _____

Important: To offset the cost of shipping and handling please include "one dollar".

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By John Dentinger

Lawyers' Ad Man

When Phoenix, Arizona, attorney Van O'Steen and his then-partner John Bates decided in February 1976 to advertise their legal services, they first got themselves a lawyer. They contacted their former Arizona State University professor, William Canby, now a Ninth Circuit Court judge. "If you want my legal counsel," he said, "my first advice is not to run the ad."

"The die is cast," they said.

So it was. The type was already set for their small ad in the Sunday *Arizona Republic*. "Do You Need a Lawyer?" it asked. Promising "legal services at very reasonable fees," the ad listed prices and gave the address and phone number of the Legal Clinic of Bates and O'Steen.

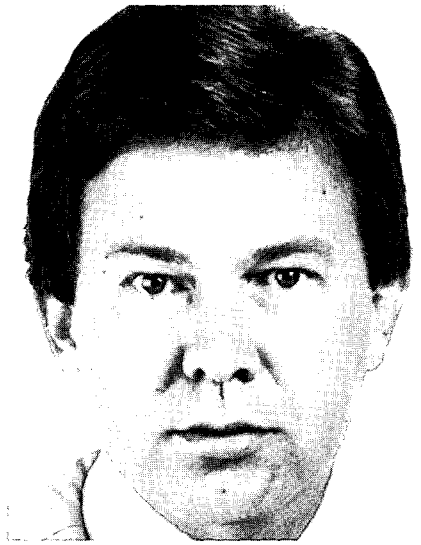
"Before the ink was dry on the newsprint of the ad," says O'Steen, they were served with a complaint, alleging a violation of the state bar association's code of ethics. (All advertising was deemed to violate it.)

Ever the contentious souls—O'Steen had been a high-school and college debater and had always wanted to be a lawyer—they were prepared to take the case as far as necessary to win. Canby agreed to represent them, refusing to accept any pay.

The first forum at which they won was the last one: the U.S. Supreme Court, in 1977. (By that time, the ACLU had stepped in and agreed to pay out-of-pocket costs.) Five justices sided with them, opening the way to today's widespread advertising by lawyers. Two dissenters agreed that a total ban on ads violates the First Amendment but said price advertising isn't protected. The remaining two—the hard-core dissenters—were Warren Burger and William Rehnquist.

"Rehnquist has a very peculiar view of the world," comments O'Steen. "He seems to think that governments and agencies, particularly at local levels, have the power to do very nearly anything they want to do."

And Burger, who never misses a chance to attack such advertising? "I think lawyer advertising offends Burger's sense of dignity, his feeling about the way the profession should run. But an American Bar Association study prior to the decision showed that two-thirds of Americans don't use lawyers and fear that they'll cost too much. The informational value of advertising will, over time, put many of those fears to rest. The public and the bar will both be better served."



Van O'Steen: *"The informational value of advertising will, over time, put fears to rest. The public and the bar will both be better served."*

What Burger still doesn't comprehend, O'Steen learned the hard way. Over the years, he has gradually moved from conventionally liberal beliefs to an understanding that consumers and justice are better served by the marketplace than by restrictions.

In the early 1970s, he and Bates were staff attorneys at a county legal aid society. "I liked the feeling of accomplishment that came from successfully handling legal matters for people who were unaccustomed to using legal services—because they couldn't afford them."

Still, they turned away many people whose incomes exceeded legal-aid limits and who often couldn't afford lawyers on their own. O'Steen and Bates saw a large untapped market for inexpensive legal services and figured that with the right forms and procedures, clerks could do much of the routine work.

Taking this "systems approach," they opened a "legal clinic" in a tiny $200-a-month office in an old building on the edge of downtown Phoenix; a drunk lived on the front sidewalk. They offered wills for $25, uncontested divorces for $95, and bankruptcy papers for $150, figuring high volume would make up for low fees.

But they wound up with low fees and *low* volume. The clinic's net income the first year was slightly below zero. O'Steen and his wife, Debbie, sold their cars and resorted to bicycles, living off the money Debbie made managing a flower shop. Bates went into debt and later had to sell his house.

The problem was clear: How was the public to know about the firm's bargain rates? It was advertise or close. So they advertised. The rest is history.

A few months after they won their case, however, O'Steen and Bates formed separate law firms. O'Steen now spends about 70 hours a week as a consultant to lawyers who want to advertise effectively—something they don't always do.

For example, says O'Steen, Ken Hur, an attorney in Wisconsin, "did these crazy, hilarious TV commercials. He offered a free 10-speed bike for anyone they represent who loses a driving-under-the-influence case." Hur got on the Johnny Carson show, but he went broke.

O'Steen believes successful legal marketing leads to better legal practice. "With the high volume of work comes a need to systematize, so the work can be handled with a high level of quality assurance." Clients may be more impressed with costly "customized" word-processed boilerplate than with filled-out forms, but the latter, he says, tend to minimize errors and omissions.

"These high-volume firms will withstand the rigors of the shakeout period. It's like going from mom-and-pop grocery stores to supermarkets. We are seeing the emergence of regional and international law firms: Jacoby & Meyers, Hyatt Legal Services (in 20 states)—law firms could not grow that way without advertising."

And other restrictions? "Statutes prohibiting the unauthorized practice of law should be abolished. State legislatures, bar associations, and supreme courts have no business restricting the buyer's choice to licensed lawyers." Legal Luddites, look out.

John Dentinger is a free-lance writer in Los Angeles.

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Jack Kerouac, American

By Bill Kauffman

When I pass to and fro, different latitudes, different seasons, beholding the crowds of the great cities, New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Chicago, St. Louis, San Francisco, New Orleans, Baltimore—when I mix with these interminable swarms of alert, turbulent, good-natured, independent citizens, mechanicks, clerks, young persons—at the idea of this mass of men, so fresh and free, so loving and so proud, a singular awe falls upon me. I feel, with dejection and amazement, that among our geniuses and talented writers or speakers, few or none have yet really spoken to this people, created a single image-making work for them, or absorb'd the central spirit and the idiosyncrasies which are theirs—and which, thus, in highest ranges, so far remain entirely uncelebrated, unexpress'd.

—Walt Whitman
Democratic Vistas, 1871

Whitman's despair was premature and perhaps unfounded—for 16 years earlier he had published an earthy, rapturous book of poems titled *Leaves of Grass* that was to serve as a touchstone for all who wished to explore the American soul. And just 14 years after the elegiac *Democratic Vistas*, Mark Twain set a runaway slave named Jim and a runaway boy named Huck Finn on a raft down the Mississippi River, creating an enormously resonant image that has since served generations of American writers (and filmmakers): the journey in search of freedom—and its frequent consequence, self-discovery—played out against the backdrop of this vast and wondrous continent.

But Walt Whitman's lament was a common refrain in the 19th century. It sprung from the conviction, ragged today but still right, that there was a distinct American character: open, raw, free, democratic, exuberant, virile. And just as the colonies had declared political independence from Europe, with her accursed monarchies, despotisms, and aristocracies, so too should the American writer reject the chains and shackles of the Old World. New England clergyman William Ellery Channing admonished his countrymen: "It were better to have no literature, than form ourselves unresistingly on a foreign one....A country, like an individual, has dignity and power only in proportion as it is self-formed."

All of which brings us to yet another decennial observance. Not, this time, of some epic battle or ephemeral peace treaty. Rather, this year we commemorate a book and an author who answered Old Whitman's fervent prayers. For 1987 marks the 30th anniversary of the publication of Jack Kerouac's novel *On the Road*, perhaps the most ecstatic celebration of America ever written.

Kerouac's life is happy proof that the writer need not be an effete *observer* of life; he can live it with gusto. Born in 1922 into a devoutly Catholic French-Canadian family in the grimy old mill town of Lowell, Massachusetts, young Jack's boyhood was devoted to that venerable trio—football, girls, and writing.

Yet this dashing, hard-drinking football star adopted early in life a starkly simple, childlike moral philosophy from his saintly older brother Ti Gerard, who died at age nine: "Never hurt any living being, all living beings whether it's just a little cat or squirrel or whatever, all are going to heaven straight into God's snowy arms so never hurt anything and if you see anybody hurt anything stop them as best you can." Now this might sound mawkish or wimpy, even to the modern Phil Donahue man, but to Kerouac it was no joke. He remained, till his dying day, that holy incongruity: a rugged pacifist.

Jack the nonviolent running back set off, football scholarship in hand, for Columbia University, where a broken leg promptly ended his athletic career. So he resolved, instead, to become "a great writer like Thomas Wolfe," and he soon fell in with a crowd of defiantly unkempt poets and wildmen who were to turn the staid, musty literary world on its ear.

Kerouac and his new friends, most notably the poet Allen Ginsberg, called themselves "Beats." San Francisco "humorist" Herb Caen renamed them "beatniks," a term the passionately anticommunist Kerouac disavowed for its Soviet-stooge connotations. But the moniker caught on, fanned by sensationalist news coverage, and by the mid-'50s a new ha-ha cultural stock figure was born—the Beatnik, a sullen, goateed *artiste* with a black beret and a spacey girlfriend who recites, in monotone, bad poetry blaming Dad and Mom for the atom bomb.

That image was a lie, lived only by the fools who gather like June bugs whenever the fickle spotlight of the media illumines the latest Movement of the Day. Kerouac took pains to distance himself from the faddists—a difficult task, since the precise meaning of Beat was always unclear. Some claimed that it meant liberation from the conformity and cultural straitjacket of the postwar era; others took it as affirmation of the wisdom of bums and hobos and other "beat down" rascals. The Catholic Kerouac

sometimes asserted that Beat was the shortened form of beatitude, a state of blessed happiness and cheerful acceptance of earthly suffering.

Whatever definition one prefers, the transcendent goal of the Beat movement was to revive American literature by infusing it with the rambunctious spirit that is peculiar to this land. Their model was Whitman; their method, an obsessively personal prose and poetry that was proudly, ebulliently native American. As Kerouac later wrote: "Like my grandfather America was invested with wild self-believing individuality and this had begun to disappear around the end of World War II with so many great guys dead...when suddenly it began to emerge again, the hipsters began to appear gliding around saying, 'Crazy, man.' "

The Beats called their method of writing "spontaneous bop prosody." The critic Seymour Krim describes it well:

"The bulk of highbrow young writers Kerouac's own age were strangling themselves, he believed, with grueling and ultrasober notions of 'wit,' 'tension,' 'density,' and 'complexity' in writing....All this seemed falsely over-intellectual and forced to Kerouac and his band of guerrillas. Writing, they thought, loses all of its value to the individual if it has to be put through such a grotesquely convoluted process....Thus Kerouac's 'rhythm writing'—no censoring, no rationalizing, no tampering with the flow—was a most dramatic counterpart to the kind of statically intellectual work he felt was slowing down the literary scene. He wanted to tear open all the vents of being and let the actual thought at the moment it was conceived drop upon the page without apology."

Kerouac's prose, as you can imagine, is manic, frantic, joyously uninhibited. The purpose of his writing was to squeeze his soul out onto each page, to give voice to "the unspeakable visions of the individual." The result is long hyper-energetic sentence-paragraphs that carry the reader like a runaway train:

"The only people for me are the mad ones, the ones who are mad to live, mad to talk, mad to be saved, desirous of everything at the same time, the ones who never yawn or say a commonplace thing, but burn, burn, burn like fabulous yellow roman candles exploding like spiders across the stars and in the middle you see the blue centerlight pop and everybody goes, 'Awww!' "

The mad yellow roman candle who inspired that ejaculation was Kerouac's pal

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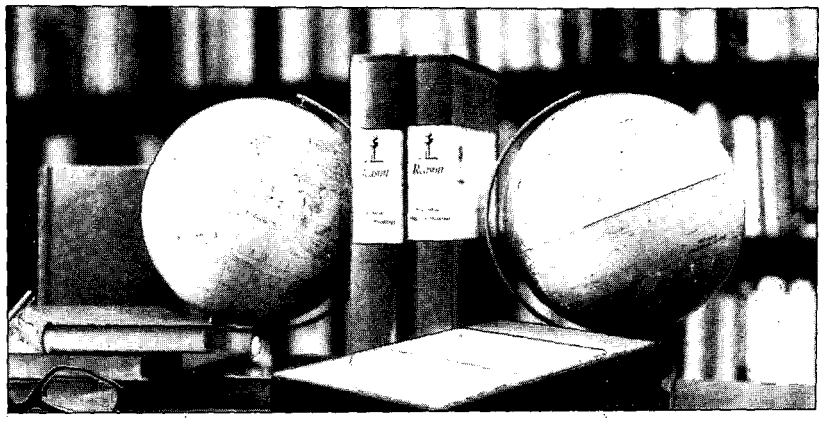

Back in 1947, the heyday of central planning and socialism, F. A. Hayek gathered a small band of writers and thinkers at Mont Pelerin in Switzerland. Their "mission impossible" task: to reverse the worldwide trend toward socialism and restore the vitality of classical liberal ideas of free trade, individualism, and free markets.

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Neal Cassady, a strapping Kirk Douglas look-alike who seemed to the Beats to be some sort of cowboy apotheosis: born in the back seat of a jalopy in Salt Lake City, Cassady dazzled his friends with his expansive and generous nature, hell-bent lifestyle, voracious appetite for conversation, and prodigious sexual feats, leading Kerouac to immortalize him as the character Dean Moriarty in *On the Road*.

Has there ever been a character as breathless as Dean Moriarty? He enters the bookish New York world of Kerouac alter ego Sal Paradise on page one, fresh out of reform school, babbling nonstop about Nietzsche and fast cars and the meaning of life, and leads Paradise and his friends on a series of wild cross-continental trips. Moriarty's reckless enthusiasm for life infects Paradise with the wanderlust, not as an expression of aimlessness but because there's just so damn much to see and feel in this country.

What is mundane and dreary to so many sad folks is, to Moriarty and his pupil Paradise, pure joy. A trip to the corner store becomes occasion for epiphany, a revelation of how rich and sweet our lives can be. Paradise walks into a Nebraska diner, haggard and hungry, and meets euphoria:

"I heard a great laugh, the greatest laugh in the world, and here came this rawhide old-timer Nebraska farmer with a bunch of other boys into the diner; you could hear his raspy cries clear across the plains, across the whole gray world of that day. Everybody else laughed with him. He didn't have a care in the world and had the hugest regard for everybody. I said to myself, Wham, listen to that man laugh. That's the West, here I am in the West....It was the spirit of the West sitting right next to me. I wished I knew his whole raw life and what the hell he'd been doing all these years besides laughing and yelling like that. Whooee, I told my soul."

That passage is typical of the book—a yelping, loving ode to America. The cowboy-deity Moriarty enters Paradise's gray world, helps him to dig the spirit of the West, then takes his leave, walking, alone, into the dark American night. (In a later book, *Visions of Cody*, Kerouac's canonization of Cassady is fully realized.)

Kerouac wrote *On the Road* on Benzedrine and booze over a three-week period in 1951. It was rejected by publisher after publisher, until in 1957 Viking took a chance on the now-despondent, penniless King of the Beats. The day after its publication, the *New York Times* featured an effusive review by Gilbert Millstein, calling the book's appearance "a historic occasion." Fame and, for a time, fortune, followed.

"The only people for me are the mad ones..." Jack Kerouac (right) immortalized his mad-for-life pal Neal Cassady (left) in ***On the Road.***

On the Road, together with Allen Ginsberg's poem "Howl," was a stunning reassertion of the raw and revolutionary character of American literature. Many of the day's finest young writers, like Norman Mailer, recognized kindred spirits and rallied round the Beats. But the establishment mounted a counterattack.

"That's not writing," whined Truman Capote of Kerouac's work, "that's typing." Harsher still was the egregious Norman Podhoretz, now editor of the grim right-wing monthly *Commentary*, then an avowed social-climbing literary critic. In a venomous 1958 essay in *Esquire*, Podhoretz measured the Beats with ludicrous overstatement: "We are witnessing a revolt of all the forces hostile to civilization itself—a movement of brute stupidity that is trying to take over the country." (This little essay, in addition to warning "the guardians of our civilization" that the Beat barbarians were at the door, included nasty and pretentious attacks on James Dean and Elvis Presley.)

And what if the Beats *had* taken over the country? Most shunned politics, unlike their patron saint Whitman, who began his career as a militantly free-trade newspaper editorialist allied with the laissez-faire wing of the Jacksonian movement, the Loco Focos. But to the Beats, politics was just so...soulless. The duty of the public man, after all, is to put reins on wild, self-believing individuals. There is no room in the Young Socialist League or the College Republicans for the Ti Gerards or the Dean Moriartys of this world.

Kerouac's faith reposed not in political hacks but in his beloved America, the land from which he had drawn his voice. Writer Jack McClintock sketches the gentle patriotism of a man supposedly "hostile to civilization itself":

"Kerouac told us once of a party of Ken Kesey's in New York, at which Ginsberg came up and wrapped Jack's shoulders with an American flag—with obvious satiric intent.

" 'So I took it [he showed how he took it, and the movements were tender] and I folded it up the way you're supposed to, and I put it on the back of the sofa. The flag is not a rag.' "

A couple of years after that party, on October 21, 1969, Jack Kerouac died. The pressures of sudden fame had sapped his spirit and driven him off the road long ago. By the end of his life he was a bloated alcoholic, living in Florida with his wife and adoring mother.

Kerouac had published 19 books, relaying with varying degrees of success the unspeakable visions of one individual. His finest book, *On the Road*, has taken its place with *The Great Gatsby*, *Huck Finn*, and a handful of others in the canon of great American novels. Kerouac's body lies in a small Catholic cemetery in Lowell. His epitaph reads, "He Honored Life," and he did.

Bill Kauffman is Washington Editor of REASON.

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I was filled with hurt on my way home from work. I could bear the pain I was feeling but why did others have to suffer. I left the bus and walked through the park in a zig-zag path. Overtaken with exhaustion, I gently leaned on a tree only to sink against it and fall on the grass filled with grief. Christmas was coming and I couldn't even afford cards for my loved ones. I was so ashamed and filled with anguish. I wished there was something I could do.

Just then an amazing idea came to me. It was so amazing that I got up off the grass and began to run madly home. I sang as I ran home because I knew Christmas was going to be merry this year.

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the book case

Prohibition Revisited

By Roy Childs

The Underground Empire: Where Crime and Governments Embrace
By James Mills, New York: Doubleday, 1165 pages, $22.95

The Underground Empire had everything going for it. James Mills has written seven previous works of fiction and nonfiction, including two sensitive novels about the drug scene—*Panic in Needle Park* and *Report to the Commissioner*—that were made into successful films. He has handled both fiction and nonfiction with equal skill. Now he has literally submerged himself in the underground world of big-time drug dealing and drug-related crimes to produce a truly "big" book that nevertheless misses badly as a comprehensive look at the illegal world of drug trafficking. To understand why, we must look at what this gigantic book manages to accomplish—and what it ignores.

Mills went in search of the ultimate drug story and found his way into CENTAC (Central Tactical Units, suborganizations within the Drug Enforcement Administration), whose commander quickly accepted him as a sympathetic reporter, giving him the chance to follow CENTAC agents firsthand in pursuit of three world-class drug dealers. For nearly five years, Mills joined the chase and got caught up in its drama. He found himself going "through the door" into a world he never dreamed existed.

What emerges from this effort is a gigantic gangster epic, played out across three continents with a cast of thousands. We follow the obsessive hunt for three drug kingpins. The first is Donald Steinberg, a nice Jewish boy from the South Side of Chicago. Steinberg found his way to south Florida and became head of one of the largest marijuana empires in the world until CENTAC broke him, reducing him to the status of a government informant serving a 10-year sentence in prison. The second is Alberto Sicilia-Falcon, a Cuban homosexual who transplanted himself to Central America and the southwest United States, where he became the recognized lord of cocaine traffic. The third is a Chinese mystery man, Lu Hsu-Shui, allegedly the boss of an international heroin ring that seems to encompass whole nations.

Mills talked freely with nearly everyone involved, from the heights of CENTAC to the innards of each of the drug operations. He shows us the world of drugs from the kingpins running international syndicates to lowly dealers, from self-proclaimed assassins to government officials, foreign and domestic, on the take.

And the wealth involved! Mills shows us glamour straight out of "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous": men and women surrounded by the riches of kings and the drama of international intrigue. The sums are simply staggering: at one point Sicilia-Falcon is said to have $250 million in two Swiss bank accounts alone and another $150 million in petty cash earmarked for bribes and payoffs of government officials. Hundreds of thousands of dollars are thrown around by all the major traffickers, for whom even a few million dollars aren't enough to worry about. Tens of millions are made and squandered in a matter of days. Lavish homes and automobiles are given away like tips in a restaurant. Entire fleets of ships and private homes up and down the coast of the United States are bought and sold, used and abandoned, as the drugs make their way through the country. By the very nature of the case, no one can know how much is involved here, but Mills claims that "the inhabitants of the earth spend more money on illegal drugs than they spend on food."

Mills gets caught up in the drama and the sheer scope of the drug trade, in the cops-and-robbers aspects. The strong suit of his book is the endless attention to detail and nuance he brings to the story. He wields a novelist's touch to give us subtle character sketches of people on all levels of the trade. We watch this vast illegal traffic unfold step by step.

At times this gets wildly out of control. Mills is so fascinated by the people involved that he lets them talk for page after page without pause or interruption, often without asking a single critical question while they tell the story of their lives in the "underground empire." Indeed, Mills found one self-confessed assassin, Michael Decker, so fascinating that he let him talk, on and off through this gigantic book, for more than *100 pages* of direct quotations, with barely

GWYN STRAMLER

a quibble!

But by the end of the book Mills is driven more by rage and disgust than by the awe with which he began. He thinks that CENTAC was proving to be the most effective weapon ever used against the international traffic before it was disbanded by the Reagan administration, which tried to give the FBI central control over the entire war on drugs.

CENTAC was disbanded in part because even under Reagan, other foreign-policy objectives proved ultimately more important than the single-minded assault on drugs. The Reagan administration wasn't willing to subordinate all other international goals to the end of crushing the drug trade. Mills ends with a barely restrained bitterness, openly showing contempt toward those he sees as drug "appeasers."

He lingers on a thought that recurs again and again throughout these 1,100 pages plus: Is it all one grand worldwide conspiracy? He notes that over a period of five years he became convinced of the participation in the drug trade of high-level government officials in at least 33 countries, from France and Italy to Bulgaria and Taiwan. Is this not the makings of a worldwide organization of the top narcotics traffickers, he postulates—an organization that could not exist "without the indulgence of the United States government"? The thought haunts him continually, and he never shakes free of it.

It's no wonder *The Underground Empire* has made a splash. The hefty tome was published last year at the height of the latest drug-menace hype and was taken very seriously. NBC's "Today" show covered it in detail for five consecutive mornings, ABC promptly snatched up rights for a future mini-series, and the book was heaved aboard bestseller lists, as it went on to sell more than 100,000 copies.

Then the criticisms hit. The first was by Harvard Law professor Alan Dershowitz, in *The New York Review of Books*. Dershowitz questioned Mills's gullibility in accepting almost without question virtually every assertion made by CENTAC and its friends, including the self-confessed assassin Michael Decker, whose account of his own adventures smacks of nothing if not megalomania and high fantasy. And the book had some internal inconsistencies.

Then came the *Los Angeles Times* with a front-page story last October by staff writer David Johnson, that ran to several thousand words. The *Times* talked with 43

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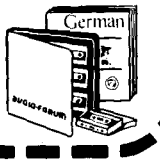

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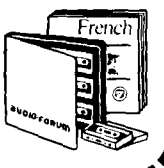

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people involved with events described in the book who claimed that at least part of what Mills wrote was untrue. High officials in the DEA and elsewhere questioned the importance of CENTAC and of its egomaniacal director, Dennis Dayle. Even Doubleday's publishing standards were called into question, but it nevertheless announced that it would "stand by the book."

The astonishing thing about the book's critics, however, is their superficiality. They call dates and references into question but completely miss the larger point: though *The Underground Empire* misses in some details, the overall picture it paints of the drug underworld is almost certainly accurate, even if the notion of a single worldwide conspiracy is absurd.

What is missing both from the book and from the criticisms of its detractors is reflection: Why is all this happening? We are given mountains of facts without any reasoning. Not once in Mills's entire tome is the word *Prohibition* mentioned. Not once is the parallel to Prohibition in the United States during the 1920s mentioned, including how Prohibition served as the opening wedge for organized crime in America.

No one stops to point out that the "empire" Mills has stumbled onto is simply a gigantic black market for products that are in great demand all over the world. This black market is a lightening rod for ferocious government opposition that is constantly compromised and defeated because of the lure of lucrative bribes and the fear of bloody threats.

Look at the situation: you have enormous demand for these drugs, and because of government prohibitionist policies, drug prices skyrocket so much that there are billions of dollars (between $100 and $500 billion) to be made every year in this black market. This attracts risk-takers from every slice of society, each of whom wants a piece of the action. With such enormous amounts of money at stake, it is easy enough to predict the prevalence of both bribes and violence.

Consider a single case: trucks cross the U.S.-Mexican borders filled with tons of marijuana worth millions. Mills naively thinks it can be stopped. Tell that to border guards and customs agents who, according to his own research, are each paid $5,000 per trip, sometimes amounting to $15,000 in two or three days, simply for looking the other way. And those are the *lowest* bribes we read about in this enormous book.

Where is Mills's—and his critics'— sense of reality here? When a ship that contains a load of cocaine or heroin worth perhaps $20 million is being searched, how can we possibly avoid hefty bribes? What angelic creatures are Mills and company going to find to supervise these busts? And if the bribes aren't accepted, should we be surprised at the regular use of assassins to achieve the same ends?

The paradox is that the more energy and resources governments squander in trying to stop the flow of drugs, the more lucrative drug dealing becomes. In short, you could jail every single individual involved in this black market, and a whole new market structure would spring up almost overnight—as if by an "invisible hand." It really is that simple. As in the movie *Wargames*, the only way to win is not to play the game.

Roy Childs is editorial director of Laissez Faire Books in New York City.

Pilgrimage to Other Worlds

By Patrick Cox

***Child of Fortune*, by Norman Spinrad**
New York: Bantam, 515 pages, $16.95/$4.50

Norman Spinrad has been around for a long time. Among science fiction writers, he has ranked among the moderately successful *enfants terribles* for several decades—one of the angry young writers worth reading, though he has never really attained the ranks of the greats. Like Harlan Ellison, he does have a loyal following, but his political tone and, until recently, his lack of real artistic depth have necessarily limited his appeal.

But Spinrad is not the young writer who wrote the biting social protest *Bug Jack Baron* in the late '60s—his best-known book about the coming of middle age to then-contemporary liberal Berkeley radicals. The hero of the book, Jack Baron, is a talk-show host and thorn in the side of an industrialist who has turned his longevity research institute into a government-protected monopoly. Baron is forced to come to terms with his own price when he is offered physical immortality in return for supporting the monopoly. It is appropriate that now—as *Bug Jack Baron* is set to become a movie and Spinrad has reached the middle age of his most famous fictional hero—his work has attained the maturity and depth that he lacked in the past.

With *Child of Fortune*, it is evident that Spinrad has found himself as a writer. It is a beautiful composition about a young woman, Wendi Shasta Leonardo, and her *wanderjahr*, the time of travel and self-discovery that most young adults of the future engage in before settling down to a career. Called "children of fortune," they are universally encouraged to vent the ardor of the transition from puberty to adulthood not on their own societies but in a pilgrim-like adventure, reminiscent of the experience of so many during the late '60s.

Child of Fortune is a tale of consciousness raising, of the trials and tribulations of the heroine as she journeys to a variety of planets during her *wanderjahr*. She visits the pharmaceutical center of the universe, where the use and misuse of drugs confronts her. She visits a totally free-market planet, where she runs out of money and has to fend for herself in a relatively unsympathetic culture. She gets involved with the king of the gypsies, the cult hero of the children of fortune. And the book is in part the story of her own struggle as a writer to recount her experiences.

Curiously, *Child of Fortune* parallels Tom Robbins's latest, *Jitterbug Perfume*, in many ways, especially in its harkening to the same elevation of consciousness as a reward in itself. Robbins, best known for *Even Cowgirls Get the Blues*, has slowly been drifting into science fiction. *Jitterbug Perfume*, if it were Robbins's first book, would be stocked in the science fiction section of bookstores. Like *Child of Fortune*, it is the story of a pilgrimage and consciousness raising. I would be very interested to know whether Spinrad read *Jitterbug Perfume* before writing *Child of Fortune*, or if both he and Robbins built on similar cultural and literary foundations.

Child of Fortune struck me on three levels. First, it stands up as a book, which is to say that it does not fall into the category of much science fiction that is simply a vehicle for a concept or story. *Child of Fortune* is not just a story; it is a

story about stories in which the form itself is the purpose.

The influence of Alfred Bester, one of the greatest of American wordsmiths and perhaps the very best in science fiction, is evident. Spinrad's language of the future is a mixture of languages that is not only believable but a joy to read, though it may require several dictionaries for those unfamiliar with major tongues. There are few books that force me to stop and reread a paragraph for the pleasure of the language. *Child of Fortune* is one.

Second, the book openly favors a type of idealism, as in the political and spiritual activism of the late-'60s, that now seems relegated to nostalgia. I have always resented Tom Hayden and his ilk who attempted to co-opt the anti-Vietnam war movement, which was fundamentally a spontaneous cultural uprising, into a leftist coup d'etat.

The activism of the period was a purely American rejection of the authoritarian disdain that the government showed toward the people. Though it is true that many of the reactions to the system were just that—reactionary—the period had an impact that is still felt strongly today, perhaps more strongly than many will admit. Very few authors have attempted to translate the fervor and convictions of the era into middle-aged and more-educated sensibilities. Spinrad is one of them.

The third noteworthy aspect of *Child of Fortune* is the very, very German flavor of the work—in subject matter, philosophical bent, and writing style. Previously, Spinrad wrote fictional works in which Adolph Hitler played central roles, books that have been banned in Germany, but he was only writing about German issues. With *Child of Fortune* and its predecessor, *Void Captain's Tale* (1983), the very essence of Spinrad's art is German.

The old conflict between disciplined, scientific intellectualism and sensation, verging on hedonism, is at work, richly serving the flavor of cabaret Berlin at its most decadent. And it should be noted that neither book will please the morally timorous. Sexual and pharmaceutical experimentation are accepted in the future of Norman Spinrad, much as they are practiced today and were practiced in the German counterculture during the rise of the Third Reich.

Void Captain's Tale, in particular, focuses on the tension between the search for pleasure versus duty or responsibility. It is, in a sense, a precursor to *Child of Fortune*, establishing the technology of cheap transit

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REASON

and some of the culture of Spinrad's future, though there is no congruence of characters.

In some ways, it seems that everything Spinrad has written was leading up to this latest work. The discovery that a good writer has evolved into a brilliant one is worth celebrating. If there is a negative side to *Child of Fortune*, it is that it may appeal to writers more than to casual readers. Unlike much science fiction that deals with cultural evolution, this book deals with an individual's personal evolution in a future where economic and civil liberties are taken for granted by virtue of the choices offered by inexpensive interstellar travel.

Child of Fortune will offend many people who have settled into familiar explanations and views. Those who are willing to alter their consciousness will appreciate what Norman Spinrad has done. More important, it raises the very pleasant prospect of what he will do next.

Patrick Cox is a free-lance writer who contributes frequently to USA Today.

Conservatism: Dream and Reality, by Robert Nisbet, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 115 pages, $25/ $9.95. Ronald Reagan's 1980 presidential victory signaled an apparent success for conservative ideology. His campaign effused all the hallmarks of traditional conservatism —family, neighborhood, church, voluntary associations, limited government, decentralization, and laissez faire all figured prominently in his speeches.

Yet behind the veneer of conservative boosterism lurked a medley of political persuasions. The far right, evangelical crusaders, libertarians, old-line conservatives, and military populists all jockeyed for influence. And many were decidedly *not* conservative in the American tradition.

That tradition, observes sociologist Robert Nisbet in *Conservatism: Dream and Reality*, harks back to the writings of 18th-century British philosopher Edmund Burke, especially to his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. What distinguishes conservatism most from other ideologies, including liberal individualism, is its emphasis on traditional associations as the bulwark of social order and freedom. These associations "are valuable as mediating and nurturing contexts for individuals and equally valuable as buffers against the power of the state."

Yet the Reagan phenomenon, with its moral and military crusaders, would burden us with more, not less, government. The far right, warns Nisbet, "is less interested in Burkean immunities from government power than it is in putting a maximum of government power into the 'right' hands." And he adds, "From the traditional conservative's point of view it is fatuous to use the family—as evangelical crusaders regularly do—as the justification for their tireless crusades to ban abortion categorically, to bring the Department of Justice in on every Baby Doe, to mandate by constitution the imposition of 'voluntary' prayers in the public schools, and so on."

Equally undeserving of the "conservative" appellation are the military crusaders who would engage the United States in far-flung military adventures to preserve the American way. For, points out Nisbet, "in America throughout the twentieth century, and including four substantial wars abroad, conservatives had been steadfastly the voices of non-inflationary military budgets, and of an emphasis on trade in the world instead of American nationalism." Nisbet rightly concludes that, whatever its

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rhetoric, the Reagan phenomenon is not a triumph for conservative ideology.

Nisbet does far more than reflect upon the Reagan administration. *Conservatism* is a concise anatomy of Western conservative thought over the past 200 years. In just over 100 pages, he manages to unveil its major tenets—political, economic, religious, and philosophical.

This pithy little book is not intended as a major philosophical contribution, yet it provokes reflection. Is liberal individualism necessarily incapable of finding an important role for tradition and social groups in the scheme of things? If, as in conservative ideology, traditional institutions reign supreme over any notion of individual rights, by what standard are oppressive institutions to be condemned?

The conservative view of culture and social evolution emphasizes the complexity of human action. Social institutions evolve through time and embody experiences, knowledge, and purposes that escape comprehensive understanding. For that reason, as Nobel laureate F. A. Hayek so poignantly insists, attempts to refashion social order through cognitive design or rational planning will inevitably fail. Conservative ideology grasps this fundamental point but grapples inadequately with the potential for violence against individuals that resides in the social group.

Nisbet himself makes no attempt to settle these issues. But his account of history illuminates the all-too-precipitous process by which individualism can deteriorate into egalitarianism and the pursuit of morality can lead to tyranny. Ironically, Reagan's acolytes now invite just such tyranny in their crusade to establish laws to bolster family, morality, and tradition.

As Nisbet remarks, "From Burke on it has been a conservative precept and sociological principle since August Comte that the surest way of weakening the family, or any vital social group, is for the government to assume, and then monopolize, the family's historic functions." Burke, notes Nisbet, "saw in the radical individualism of the French revolution the seeds of destruction of traditional associations," a destruction that would beckon the tyranny of an omnicompetent state to fill the vacuum. Of such a state, based in theory on the general will of so-called sovereign individuals, one 18th-century conservative cautioned, "Each morning the citizen would look into the mirror while shaving and see the face of one ten-millionth a tyrant and one whole slave."

—L. S.

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viewpoint

By Glen Feighery

In Defense of Traders, Raiders, and Arbs

In November, the Securities and Exchange Commission rocked Wall Street by announcing that Ivan Boesky, king of the takeover speculators, had agreed to pay a record $100 million in fines to settle charges that he conducted illegal securities deals. Predictably, Boesky's fall shook investors' faith in the market, but this wasn't the worst consequence of the affair. What made this event a true scandal is the power the SEC exercised to bring Boesky to heel.

The SEC sees itself as a referee ensuring that all public investors, large and small, play on a level field. Much of Wall Street, however, recognizes this goal as impossible and views the SEC as a poorly disciplined watchdog. And in the wake of the Boesky affair, traders aren't sure whom it may bite next. "It's like the wild, wild West out there," one told *Business Week*. "It's scary."

Their concern is well-founded. For one thing, insider trading, the "crime" with which the SEC charged Boesky, lacks clear definition, partly because the SEC keeps broadening that definition.

The criminalization of insider trading defies rational explanation. If using "inside" information—knowledge not available to the general investing public—is a crime, then who are its victims? The people who sold stock to Boesky at a price probably higher than they would have got if he'd not been in the market? The SEC has forgotten that market speculation implies risk, and it has stubbornly ignored the real benefits of insider trading.

Economist and lawyer Henry Manne, dean of the George Mason University Law School, has argued that insider trading pushes stock prices in the correct direction. When insiders affect prices by their transactions, the stock more accurately reflects recent events and industry changes. Insiders thus provide a service for the rest of the market, which is then free to act as an efficient capitalizer of timely business information.

In those cases where insider trading might result in harm, it can (and should) be controlled by private contractual relationships, Manne says, rather than by vague blanket laws imposed from Washington. Banks can reach agreements with their clients; companies can stipulate to their

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employees limitations on the use of certain information. Private self-enforcement may not be perfect, but it would be a substantial improvement over the current conspiracy atmosphere where informants compete with disaffected investors to implicate speculators in the eyes of the SEC.

There is another chilling aspect of the Boesky affair. The SEC went after "Ivan the Terrible" for an important reason: He was the biggest fish on Wall Street, and netting him sent a clear message to other arbitragers the SEC wanted to intimidate. If the SEC could get Boesky, by implication it could get anyone. That, combined with the fuzziness of insider-trading laws, poses a real danger to everybody who wishes to conduct business in the open market.

And unfortunately, the long arm of the SEC doesn't end at insider trading. In recent months, other commission investigations have steadily limited the number of market institutions the government finds acceptable.

Junk bonds are an example of this. These high-risk, high-yield securities have been a major funding tool for much of Wall Street's merger and acquisition activity, and in fact were first developed to circumvent SEC constraints on such transactions. Their popularity has provided ample evidence that investors are willing to buy junk bonds, but that hasn't stopped the SEC from targeting them for extinction.

In this case also, one wonders what the regulators' motives are. Whom are they protecting? Entrenched management? Perhaps. The case of Sir James Goldsmith and Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. furnishes insight into the government's anti-entrepreneurial mentality.

At about the same time the SEC nabbed Boesky, the Anglo-French financier Goldsmith came under scrutiny by a House of Representatives subcommittee, which took it upon itself to investigate U.S. merger activity.

Goldsmith had launched a bid for Goodyear and included in it the recommendation that the company focus on its core business in order to bolster the bloated corporation's performance. This earned him the vilification of unions, Goodyear management, and Rep. John Seiberling (D-Ohio), whose grandfather founded Goodyear.

"My question is, who the hell are you?" Seiberling demanded of Sir James. This came from a man who had evidently decided that he could benefit more by spending other people's money than by creating wealth, as his grandfather had.

Despite Seiberling's rantings and those of others like him, Sir James was just what Goodyear needed. The company is stronger now, because to fend off Sir James's bid, it adopted a restructuring plan that focuses on its key tire operations and cuts spending. These moves should bring Goodyear closer to the entrepreneurial company it once was.

The lesson here should be clear to everyone, government regulators and members of Congress alike: the problems of American industry demand more entrepreneurship, not more regulation. Stirring slogans, pat simplifications, and snooping by Congress and the SEC can't replace restructuring and streamlining in response to market pressures.

My question is, who the hell is John Seiberling?

Glen Feighery is a business reporter in Tennessee.

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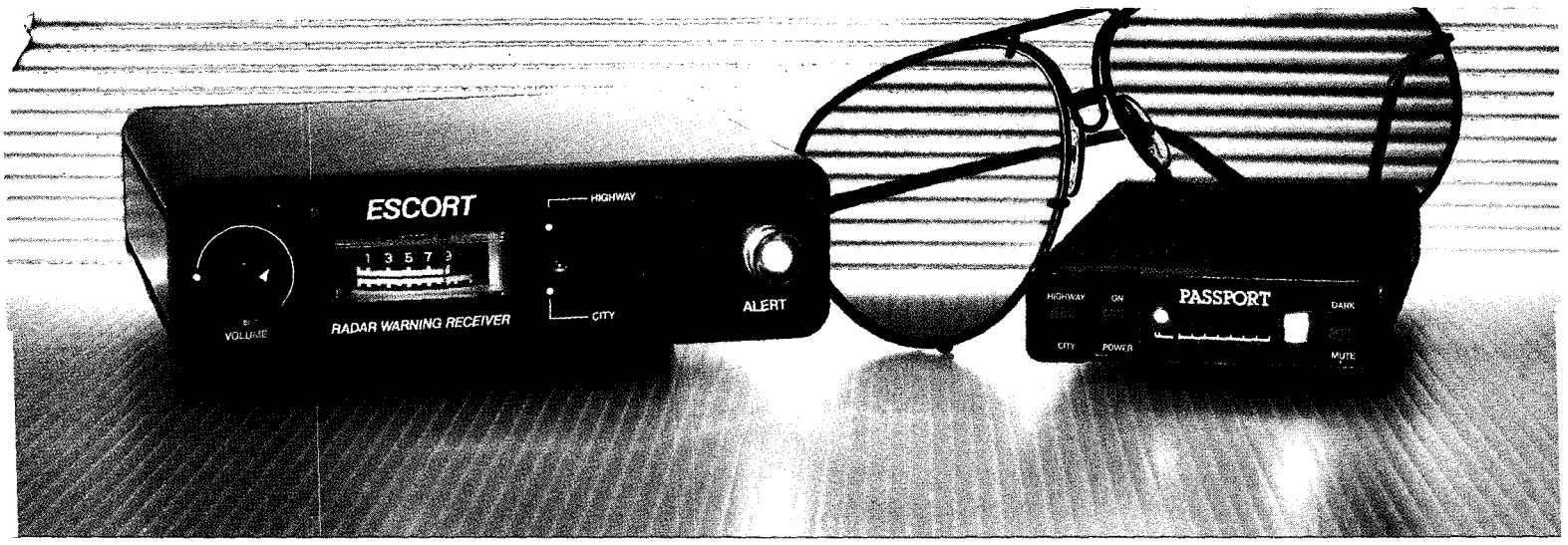


Radar warning breakthrough #4 is now available from the same engineers who made #1, #2, and #3

Bad news for radar detectors. The FCC (Federal Communications Commission) has cleared the Rashid VRSS for operation on K band.

What's a Rashid VRSS?

The Rashid VRSS is a collision warning system using a radar beam to scan the vehicle's path, much as a blind person uses a cane. It may reduce accidents, which is very good news.*

Now for the bad news

Unfortunately, the Rashid transmits on K band, which is one of the frequencies assigned to traffic radar. Rashid speaks a radar detector's language, you might say, and it can set off detectors over a mile away.

Faced with this problem, we could hope Rashid installations will be few. Or we could invent a solution.

Opportunity knocking

Actually, the choice was easier than it sounds, because our engineers are in the habit of inventing remarkable solutions. In fact, in the history of radar detection, only three advancements have qualified as genuine breakthroughs, and all three came from our engineers.

Back in 1978, they were first to adapt dual-band superheterodyne technology to the problem of traffic radar. The result was ESCORT, now legendary for its performance.

In 1983, when a deluge of cheap imported detectors was found to be transmitting on radar frequency, our engineers came through again, this time with ST/O/P™, a sophisticated circuit that could weed out these phony signals before they triggered an alarm.

Then in 1984, using SMDs (Surface Mounted Devices), micro-electronics originally intended for satellites, these same engineers designed the smallest detector ever. The result was PASSPORT, renowned for its convenience.

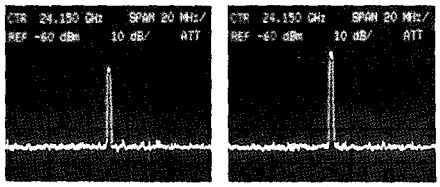
*For more information on Rashid VRSS collision warning system, see *Popular Science*, January 1986.

They said it couldn't be done

Now we're introducing breakthrough number four. In their cleverest innovation yet, our engineers have found a way to distinguish Rashid from all other K band signals. It's the electronic equivalent of finding the needle in a haystack. The AFR™ (Alternating Frequency Rejection) circuit isolates and neutralizes all Rashid signals, yet leaves the radar detection capability undiminished for your protection.

No waiting for the good stuff

When testing proved that AFR was 100 percent effective, we immediately incorporated it into ESCORT and PASSPORT. Our policy is to make running changes—not model changes—whenever a refinement is ready. That way our customers always get the latest science.



RADAR RASHID

Figure 1: A digital spectrum analyzer scanning the entire width of K band can't see the difference between radar and Rashid.

AFR is fully automatic. There are no extra switches or lights. Nothing for you to bother about. The Rashid problem simply goes away.

Last year *Road & Track* called us "**the industry leader in detector technology.**" We intend to keep earning our accolades.

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